

MONTANA'S RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITIES

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CREATING A RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	pg. 5
Introduction.....	pg. 7
Step 1 - Start the Community Conversation.....	pg. 12
Step 2- Assemble a Steering Committee.....	pg. 15
Step 3 - Engage the Community to Identify Needs.....	pg. 22
Step 4 - Assess Vulnerabilities.....	pg. 30
Step 5 - Evaluate Your Existing Community Plans.....	pg. 34
Step 6 - Prioritize Resilience Needs and Develop Strategies.....	pg. 37
Step 7 - Develop Your Plan.....	pg. 41
Step 8 - Implement and Assess.....	pg. 45
Conclusion.....	pg. 48
Appendices.....	pg. 49

Executive Summary

The Montana's Resilience Framework provides a step-by-step process for communities to identify, assess and adapt to social, economic and ecological disruptions. It provides clear instruction for communities to find opportunities to bounce forward with transition strategies that reduce future vulnerabilities and enhance their residents well-being. The intended users of this guide include local governments, community groups, or concerned citizens, any of which may initiate the resilience planning process.

Montana communities have experienced increasing frequency of shocks and stressors. Stressors include graying rural populations and aging infrastructure, unaffordable housing options, and an epidemic of opioid and methamphetamine abuse. Shocks may include sudden business closures, public health emergencies, and the increasing number of wildfires, floods, and other natural disasters.

By their very nature, shocks and stressors typically disrupt without notice. Resilient communities, however, do not wait until disaster strikes. Through community conversations and public engagement, research and planning, and development of practical solutions, resilient communities prepare for the unexpected. They build relationships and trust across public and private sectors. They identify opportunities and focus on local strategies. They coordinate effectively with state agencies and share knowledge and strategies with other communities.

Whether you are a local government official, a community group leader, or a concerned citizen, this Framework provides a road map for effective resilience planning. You may decide to develop an integrated, multi-sector community resilience plan, or you may prefer to embed resiliency into an existing or updated plan. Such plans may include growth or land-use policies, or strategic plan updates for specific sectors such as public health, transportation, utilities and infrastructure, food access and security, or pre-disaster mitigation.

Planning initiators are encouraged to begin a community conversation, then enlist a diverse Steering Committee and associated Working Groups. A resilience survey and workshop can map the community's financial and social assets and determine local priorities. The identified priorities may then be used as focal points for detailed research through a vulnerability assessment. These priorities and research findings will inform the development of action strategies. These are the key components of a draft resilience plan, which should be made available for public comment before being finalized. The final stages are implementation, continual assessment, and periodic updates.

While this framework addresses a broad range of stressors, shocks, and disruptions that face Montana communities, it especially addresses risks associated with natural disasters – wildfire, drought, flooding, and severe storms – which are projected to accelerate due to a warming global climate. Since the most effective way to mitigate these risks is for everyone to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the framework also encourages communities to seek clean energy development strategies, including energy efficiency, carbon sequestration through land-use practices, and renewable energy production.

Facing a future with new and emerging threats such as cyber-attacks, climate change, social and political instability, and global pandemics, forward-thinking communities will address these challenges head on. They may even find unanticipated opportunities, including population growth as newcomers seek refuge in Montana from disruptions such as megafires, sea level rise, or another pandemic, which in turn may increase challenges such as unaffordable housing.

By taking appropriate precautions informed by the best available science, resilient communities are well positioned to bounce back from adversity and bounce forward into a socially supportive and economically sustainable future.



Introduction

Montana's Resilience Framework represents the thoughtful input from over 1,000 Montana citizens, non-profits, state and local governments, and private businesses. The purpose of the document is:

- 1) To facilitate community conversations about vulnerabilities and opportunities, share input gathered from community members, and engage them in a process to develop local solutions; and
- 2) Provide a step-by-step process for local communities looking to increase the resilience of their social, economic, and ecological systems.

This document is intended for use by a variety of government and non-government organizations. Likewise, it is designed for motivated, self-empowered individuals who wish to initiate a community resilience discussion, planning efforts, and implementation strategies. The process described in this document can be used as a stand-alone resilience strategy or added to an existing community planning document (i.e. zoning ordinances, building codes, hazard mitigation plans, growth policies).

Project History

Following extensive flooding and wildfire across Montana in 2011, 2013 and 2015, 45 of the state's 56 counties were designated federal natural disaster areas. With the assistance of Resilience AmeriCorps members funded through the federal Corporation for National and Community Service, the Montana Department of Commerce launched the Montana Ready Communities Initiative (MRCI) to address challenges related to natural disasters and other natural, social, and economic disruptions. In 2018, the Department organized 18 community resilience summits, convened 14 agency working group meetings, and surveyed more than 650 Montanans across every region about their concerns and priorities.

The MRCI has led to the development of action strategies for state agencies and this step-by-step guide for communities to develop their own local solutions.

What is Resilience?

Resilience is a term that is used in a wide range of disciplines, generally conveying a desire to bounce back or recover from traumatic, unpredictable and high-impact events. The Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities Initiative defines resilience as, "The capacity of individuals, communities, and systems to survive, adapt, and grow amidst stressors and shocks."

The increasing frequency of natural and social disruptions has spurred government and civic leaders to do more to anticipate and prepare for a growing set of challenges. Rather than just bounce back from adversity, resilience communities recognize the need to bounce forward so that the next flood, wildfire, economic downturn or public health emergency has a less traumatic impact. Through effective planning and implementation, they seek opportunities to strengthen community connections and open new economic doors.

Montana scientists say that the increasing frequency of natural disasters over the past decade is likely to accelerate even further due to a warming global climate. The Montana Climate Assessment projects that Montana temperatures will increase 5.6 - 9.8° Fahrenheit by the end of the century with major impacts to Montana agriculture, forests, waterways, and human health.

As society begins to pivot to energy sources that are less carbon intensive, resilient communities look to diversify their economies and make the clean energy transition on their own terms.

To bounce forward from adversity, the Kresge Foundation says that resilient communities must simultaneously:

- Anticipate and prepare for pressures and shocks that climate change and other large forces will introduce or worsen;
- Lessen overall demand for energy and increase the proportion derived from renewable energy sources; and
- Foster social cohesion by strengthening connections among individuals and networks, including all community sectors.

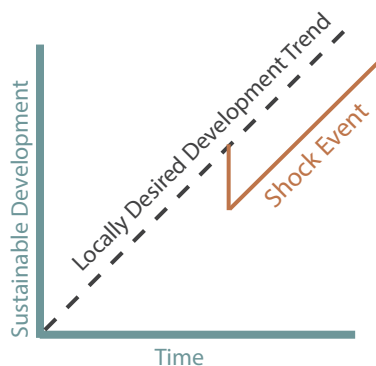
Disruption and Opportunity

Resilience planning prepares communities for future adverse events while seeking opportunities to improve economic, social and human health conditions. Shocks and stressors are two types of disruption. Opportunities are found in forward-looking community action, based around principles of sustainable development.

Acute Shocks:

An acute shock refers to a high-impact, short-term event that may significantly affect basic services, public safety, or the environment. Shocks are commonly thought of as natural disasters, but also encompass economic and other social events

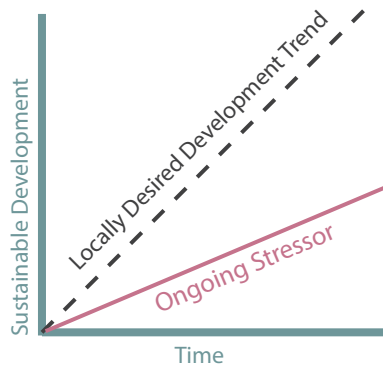
Examples: wildfires, industry/plant closure, flooding event, drought, public health crises, cyber attacks, downturn in commodity prices



Chronic Stressors

A chronic stressor refers to an ongoing environmental, social, or economic issue that results in an inefficient system of community cooperation. These stressors weaken the fabric of a community and magnify the effects of man-made or natural disasters.

Examples: poverty, lack of affordable housing, climate change, drug epidemic, lack of long-term planning



Shocks and Stressors Combined

The impact of a shock event is dependent on the underlying stressors and the magnitude of a stressor may be increased by the onset of a shock. Consider a community with high levels of poverty and poor floodplain management policies and planning. Both poverty and a lack of floodplain management are underlying stressors in this community. When a flood occurs, low-income and other vulnerable individuals may be disproportionately impacted through damage to homes and livelihoods. A flood increases the stressor of poverty post-storm and decreases the community's capacity to further develop in a way that is in line with their long-term goals.

If this community were to implement proper floodplain management systems and protect those most vulnerable, a flood event would pass by with little or no impact.

Sustainability and Resilience

Sustainability is a vital component of community resilience and is applicable to all five community sectors - built, natural, cultural, social, and economic. Rather than rebuild to a previous condition, we can view disruption as an opportunity to evaluate the community's economy, infrastructure, and social networks to reduce future exposure to disruption and to tap new resources to pursue a sustainable development path. For example, corporations and government agencies are increasing investments in rural land-use practices that sequester carbon and improve water management through on-farm soil health practices and forest stewardship. Energy efficiency improvements and development of renewable energy sources reduce vulnerability to grid failure and other large-scale disruptions, and they position rural communities to meet growing regional demand for low-carbon energy. Sustainable economic development diversifies the local economy and strengthens local self-reliance while protecting and restoring the natural environment.



A Resilient Community...

- ...is knowledgeable, healthy, and can meet basic needs of citizens.
- ...is socially cohesive and connected.
- ...has well-maintained and accessible infrastructure and services.
- ...effectively manages its natural assets.
- ...proactively plans for and considers adverse events.
- ...lessens its demand for energy while increasing the percentage used from renewable energy sources.

Terminology

Acute Shocks - a high-impact, short-term event that may significantly affect basic services, public safety or the environment

Adaptation - the process of change to become better suited for an environment
(Climate Adaptation is the process of adapting to life in a changing climate – involves adjusting to actual or expected future climate conditions)

Chronic Stressors- an ongoing environmental, social, or economic issue that results in an inefficient system of community cooperation

Climate Change - change in global and regional climate patterns attributed largely to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by combustion of fossil fuels

Mitigation - the action of reducing the severity of something
(Climate Mitigation refers to efforts to reduce or prevent emission of greenhouse gases)

Steering Committee - a diverse group that coordinates the overall resilience planning process

Social Cohesion - the sense of belonging in a community; a level of cooperative relationships among community members that contributes to collective well-being

Sustainability - use of natural, social and economic resources to meet human needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Vulnerability - the state of being exposed to adversity or harm

Working Groups - consists of Steering Committee members and other resource experts, both in and outside of the community, who focus on specific resilience challenges or opportunities

STEP 01

Start the Community Conversation

Initiate the Conversation

The first step in resilience planning is to facilitate open and inclusive conversations in your community. A recent natural disaster or economic disruption may motivate community members to come together to discuss solutions. Building trust and early buy-in from community members will help ensure the success of the planning process.

The person or organization initiating the conversation about resilience may be best received if they are a member of the community themselves. However, it can be effective for the community initiator to bring in an outside expert, such as an industry trailblazer, university researcher, or elected leader from another Montana community, to share experiences, successes and lessons learned elsewhere. AmeriCorps members may be available at little cost to the community to boost local capacity for event facilitation, research, fundraising, and coordination of volunteers.

Setting the Stage

Before scheduling a first meeting and initiating a process to strengthen community resilience, consider starting with a less formal educational or community service event, such as a food drive or tree planting day. Invite a guest speaker or show a documentary film at the public library about an issue of community concern.

For example, since 2016 more than 100 communities across Montana and other Northwest states have hosted multi-media presentations by U.S. Forest Service wildfire experts about the dramatic increase in highly destructive megafires -- wildfires over 100,000 acres -- that burn homes, threaten lives and livelihoods, damage watersheds and infrastructure, and increase insurance premiums. These presentations have sparked community field trips and conversations about reducing wildfire risk through fire-smart neighborhood planning, collaborative forest management strategies, and conservation strategies to minimize new residential construction in the wildland-urban interface.

Community connections and trust are essential components of a resilient community, so be sure to prioritize inclusivity and transparency from the beginning. Everyone's voice is important, and it sets an inclusive tone when all are invited to the table. Here are a few ways you can make sure everyone feels welcome:

- Issue a press release or call a radio or newspaper reporter,
- Create a Facebook event,
- Ask community leaders to participate and spread the word,
- Announce events during public comment periods at city council or county commission meetings,
- Send an email invitation to local organizations, business groups, churches and schools, and
- Post flyers around town.

Be sure to allow for questions and open discussion during educational events. This will put new ideas on the table and can help identify community members willing to engage in a resilience planning process. Concerned citizens, local government staff, or community organizations who initiate the planning process would be wise to follow up with interested citizens and network with a variety of groups and businesses. Seek opportunities to engage students and youth who bring important perspectives to the conversation.

There are a wide variety of ways to frame initial community discussions about strengthening local resilience, but a few rules of thumb will help get the effort off on the right foot:

- Show your passion for promoting a healthy future for the community.
- Focus on specific challenges or opportunities that will resonate with many people.
- Keep it positive. Avoid the blame game and focus instead on reasonable solutions.
- Identify local values and assets as a foundation for future community well-being.
- Ask participants about their priorities and how they propose to meet their goals for the community.
- Discuss possible options for a process to strengthen community resilience or address specific challenges.
- End with a call to action: Outline ways that community members can get involved in resilience planning such as research, public outreach, or joining the Steering Committee or work group(s).

Starting the conversation may involve several community meetings or educational presentations before the next logical step becomes clear. Once you feel you have sufficient engagement and support, you're ready to assemble a community Steering Committee to coordinate a resilience planning process.

STEP 02

Assemble
a Steering
Committee

Committee Role

The next step to developing a local resilience plan is to formally identify a set of influential community stakeholders, government or non-government groups, and motivated, self-empowered individuals that will help to:

1. Guide development of the plan.
2. Advertise and mobilize community stakeholder participation.
3. Develop and/or guide the development of resilience strategies.
4. Implement identified resilience strategies.

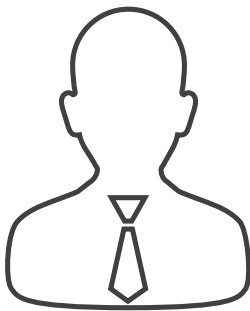
The Steering Committee may be formed by a local government body or other representative group. Alternately, in the absence of a formal process initiated by local government, the committee may be self-selected, but should attempt to broadly reflect all community stakeholders. In addition to providing overall project coordination and engaging the community, the Steering Committee's role is to establish and oversee Working Groups to work on specific issues and to integrate their findings and recommendations into a single community resilience plan.

Sample Committee

Below is a sample list of stakeholders that would be helpful to have on a Steering Committee. This list should be expanded on and amended to fit the needs of your community and the unique economic and political systems you may have in place.

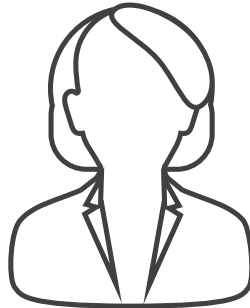
Elected Officials

Business Leaders



Examples:

Chamber of Commerce
Downtown Association
Influential Businesses
Certified Regional
Development
Corporation



Examples:

Mayor
Tribal Representatives
County Commissioner
State Representatives
School Board Members
City Council
Sheriff

Health Professionals



Examples:

Hospitals
Non-profits
Indian Health Service
Public Health Professionals

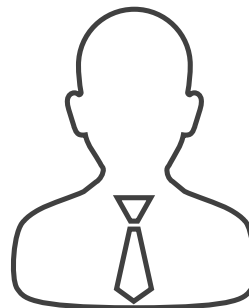
Ecological Specialists



Examples:

Watershed Groups
Conservation Districts
Non-Profits
Forest Service

Informed Citizens



Examples:

Business Owners
Educators
Property Owners
Students

Develop a Work Plan for the Steering Committee

The work plan below represents a possible outline for Steering Committee meetings. As the project evolves your work plan may look different than the one below. Resources, tools, and more detailed information to complete the sections mentioned are available in later sections of the Framework.

1. DEFINE THE PROJECT

The first goal of the steering committee is to define the plan's mission.

Outcomes:

- i. The Steering Committee has a firm understanding of what resilience is.
- ii. The Steering Committee has a clear mission statement that outlines what it hopes to achieve through the planning process.

2. ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY

Design a public outreach campaign to connect, inform, and get feedback from the local community.

Outcomes:

- i. The Steering Committee creates a formal outreach campaign.
- ii. The Steering Committee publicizes and implements the public outreach campaign.

3. IDENTIFY AND DEFINE Working Groups

Working Groups consist of Steering Committee members and other resource experts, both inside and outside of the community. The groups meet separately from the Steering Committee meetings to research, plan, and compile information to be used in the final resilience plan.

Outcomes:

- i. The Steering Committee assesses the outcome of the outreach campaign and determines priority focus areas.
- ii. The Steering Committee agrees on a set of Working Groups to address those priorities and designates people to lead and participate in the groups.



4. REVIEW WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

After the Working Groups have met on their own to research specific vulnerabilities in the community, they will create recommendations. The Steering Committee will review and edit the Working Groups' recommendations and send back to the Working Groups if further edits are needed.

Outcome:

- i. A finalized set of working group recommendations and resilience strategies.

5. DEVELOP A DRAFT PLAN FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

The Steering Committee creates an integrated document using the finalized set of working group recommendations. They develop a draft of the community resilience plan and make it available for public review and comment.

Outcomes:

- i. The Steering Committee creates a draft document.
- ii. Public comment is solicited, reviewed and incorporated as appropriate into a final plan.

6. IMPLEMENT AND UPDATE THE PLAN

The final goal of the steering committee is to determine an implementation strategy, including periodic review and updates.

Outcomes:

- i. If the Steering Committee was established through local government with decision-making authority, it presents the final plan to elected officials for adoption.
- ii. If the plan was developed outside local government and without any direct authority, the Steering Committee presents recommendations to appropriate officials for adoption.
- iii. The Steering Committee and/or local government recommend or approve a timeline, budget and responsibilities to implement, review and update the plan.

The Steering Committee and Working Groups will be most effective if they represent a broad spectrum of the community, including interested individuals who participated in initial community conversations. It also is important to have community leaders involved in the development of these strategies to ensure that the recommended actions are feasible. Their joint efforts and dedication will be the backbone of your resilience plan.

Establish Working Groups

After reviewing issues, concerns, and topics discussed during the initial community conversations the Steering Committee may assemble Working Groups to develop strategies and action plans to address one or more community priorities.

Working Groups may be formed to generally address social, economic and ecological resilience, or they may address specific issues of concern. Examples of topics tackled by Working Groups in Montana communities include wildfire risk reduction, community food systems, watershed or floodplain restoration, economic development, energy conservation, public health, neighbor-to-neighbor support networks, and K-12 education.

Working Groups may include one or more members of the Steering Committee as well as other interested community members. Working Groups research, analyze, and compile information to be consolidated in the final resilience plan along with recommended strategies. The Working Groups may choose to highlight success stories and activities already underway in the community if relevant to their efforts.



Create an Action Plan for your Working Group

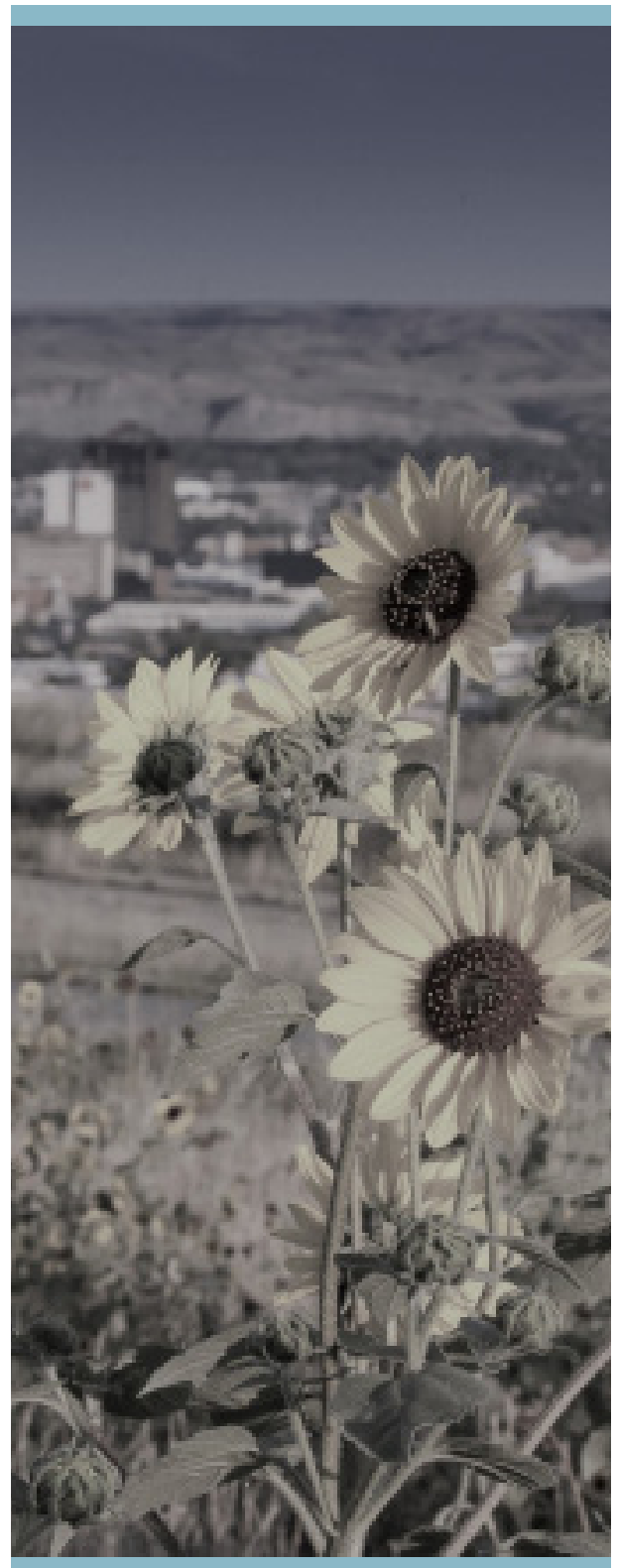
The Steering Committee and Working Groups play a complementary role in drafting the resilience framework. It is up to the Steering Committee to clearly define the role(s) of the Working Groups.

- The Steering Committee provides oversight and coordination while most of the work is done in Working Groups; or
- Most of the work is done by the Steering Committee itself, with specific tasks delegated to Working Groups.

In most cases, the Steering Committee should engage the broader community in the early stages of the project, as discussed in Step 3. Once Working Groups are established, in coordination with the Steering Committee, they should determine the scope of their duties and develop a work plan with assignments for each member or subcommittee including:

- 1) Review public input and survey results from Step 3 to determine local needs and priorities and identify community strengths, assets, and successes.
- 2) Assess community vulnerabilities and opportunities, as outlined in Step 4.
- 3) Evaluate existing community plans to cross-reference in the resilience plan and/or recommend for revision during the next update (Step 5).
- 4) Recommend resilience strategies and local solutions (Step 6).
- 5) Present recommendations to the Steering Committee to integrate into a draft plan for public review and comment.

You can find additional tools and guidelines for the Working Group process in Appendix 4.



STEP 03

Engage the
Community to
Identify Needs

Engage the Community

Engaging your community to identify specific needs can be done through a well-designed public outreach plan. The goal of public outreach is to solicit input from community members about local challenges, the impacts of shocks and stressors, community strengths and assets, and resources currently available to address these challenges and opportunities. A resilience plan should be designed for and by local community members and should address their needs and priorities.

Often, resources already exist that identify a community's vulnerabilities, needs, and existing assets. These resources should be referenced in combination with any input gathered during outreach.

THE PUBLIC OUTREACH PLAN

The public outreach plan is an informal document that outlines how the Steering Committee will gather input to guide the resilience plan. The public outreach plan should identify:

1. Outreach platforms & how they will be utilized;
2. Community networks to leverage;
3. Community stakeholders to reach out to; and
4. Questions to include in a community survey.

Outreach Platforms

Members of your community access information in many different ways, so your public outreach efforts should include a variety of engagement strategies.

Reach out to community organizations to gather input from their members who may be able to identify sector-specific needs. These may include religious groups, social organizations, conservation organizations, and local non-profit groups among others. Their collective wisdom will help your Steering Committee develop a plan that benefits all community sectors. Identifying co-benefits of resilience planning will help inform community conversations and strengthen buy-in.

It is important to reach a wide and diverse set of stakeholders to design a resilience plan that involves all segments of your community's population. The resilience plan should represent all, even contradictory, viewpoints to be representative of the entire community.

Open Houses - Plan and advertise an open house event to educate the community on resilience and your resilience initiative.

Community Survey - Develop a survey that can be distributed during meetings or on-line using a platform such as SurveyMonkey.com.

Press Meeting - Work with local media outlets to advertise the resilience survey and workshops to the public.

Community Events - Present at community events to raise awareness of public outreach surveys and meetings.

Steering Committee Networks - Each Steering Committee member informs their network of contacts about public involvement opportunities.

Stakeholder List - Directly invite diverse stakeholders. Refer to the list in Appendix 1 to get started.

Resilience Workshop - Convene a formal gathering of stakeholders to discuss and define resilience challenges and opportunities.



Resilience Workshops

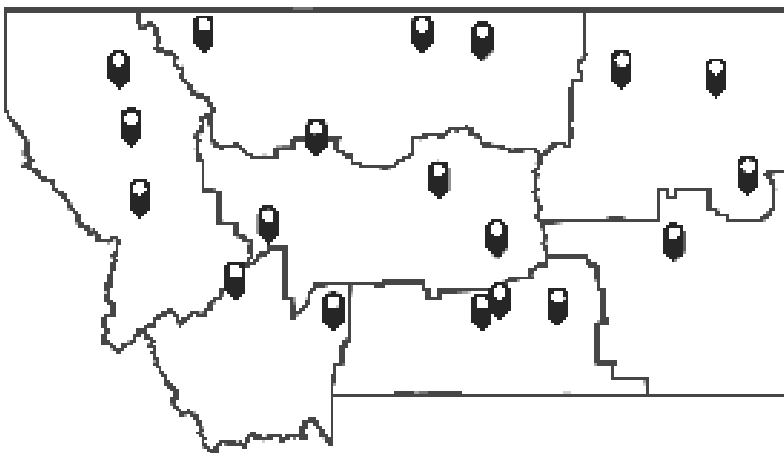
Resilience workshops are a great way to get in-depth qualitative information on the shocks, stressors, assets, and resources in your community. Consider consulting the stakeholder identification list presented in Appendix 1 for ideas on who to invite. Invite survey respondents to participate in an in-person workshop.

Materials and information on how to develop, advertise, and facilitate your own resilience workshop are available in Appendix 4.



Starting Point

In Summer 2018, the Montana Department of Commerce visited 18 Montana communities across the state and held public listening sessions to identify and prioritize shocks and stressors in the community.



HELENA JUNE 27
BILLINGS JULY 11
BUTTE JULY 23
PABLO JULY 23
MISSOULA JULY 24
KALISPELL JULY 25
BROWNING JULY 26
GREAT FALLS JULY 26
HAVRE AUGUST 13

FORT BELKNAP AUGUST 13
GLASGOW AUGUST 14
POPLAR AUGUST 14
GLENDDIVE AUGUST 15
LEWISTOWN AUGUST 27
ROUNDUP AUGUST 27
MILES CITY AUGUST 28
HARDIN AUGUST 28
BOZEMAN AUGUST 29

Summits

From June to September 2018, the Montana Department of Commerce worked with 950 stakeholders, including local elected officials, residents, community leaders, and local, state, and federal government employees across a variety of disciplines. Individuals from across the state, through surveys and summits, identified the most pressing shocks and stressors in local communities. Commerce solicited information on the resources in place to address the shocks and stressors, and discussed existing community needs relevant to the resilience challenges identified.

Through this process, Commerce received input from individuals located in all 56 of Montana's counties and members of all eight tribal nations. Commerce engaged state agencies to identify existing resources.



295	Summit Attendees
18	Resilience Summits
2	Workshops
10	Individual Meetings
654	Survey Responses
56	Montana Counties Reporting
8	Tribal Nations Reporting



Resilience Survey

A survey is a great way to get input from a wide variety of individuals, especially those unable to attend a public meeting.

Appendix 2 provides a copy of the resilience survey the Montana Department of Commerce distributed to individuals across the state.

Consider re-creating a similar survey to identify shocks, stressors, existing community resources, and community needs specific to your area.

Your survey should ask residents to identify:

1. Shocks and Stressors in your community.
2. Current assets and efforts in place to address those shocks and stressors locally and regionally.
3. Personal and community priorities.

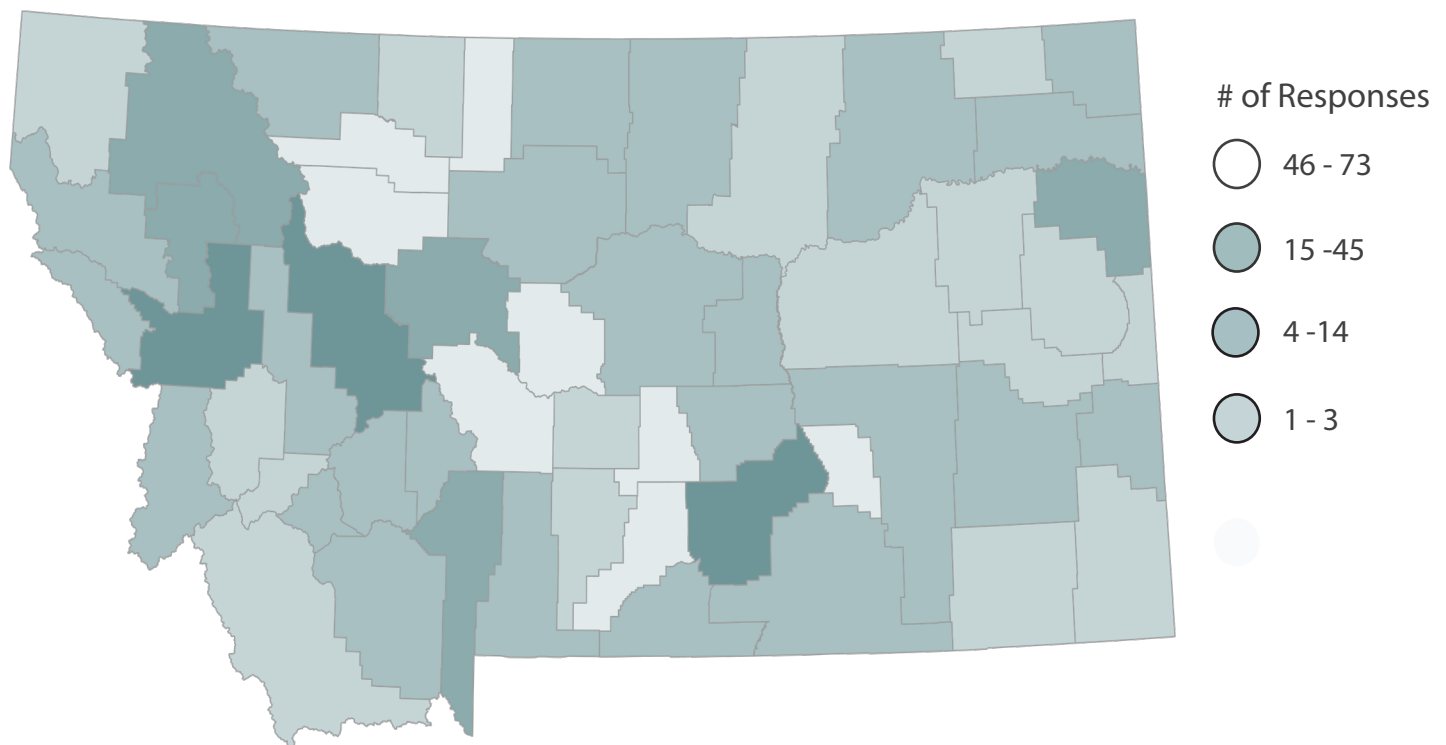
Once you've gathered public input on local concerns, community priorities, and goals, the next step is to conduct research regarding shocks and stressors. Creating a data-driven local vulnerability assessment is described in Step 04 with reference to a statewide vulnerability assessment available in Appendix 3.

2018 State Wide Resilience Survey

Montana is a large and sparsely populated state. To get input from residents across this wide geographic expanse required a two-pronged outreach approach. In addition to the 18 community summits, a statewide survey cast a wide net for public input. The survey provided important information on what shocks and stressors individuals are experiencing in different regions of Montana and an idea of what types of resources were already available to address these challenges. With over 650 responses, the survey provided a robust and informative overview across seven regions. The figures below offer a heat map of community engagement, followed by a regional breakdown of major shocks and stressors identified from the survey.

Survey Responses by County

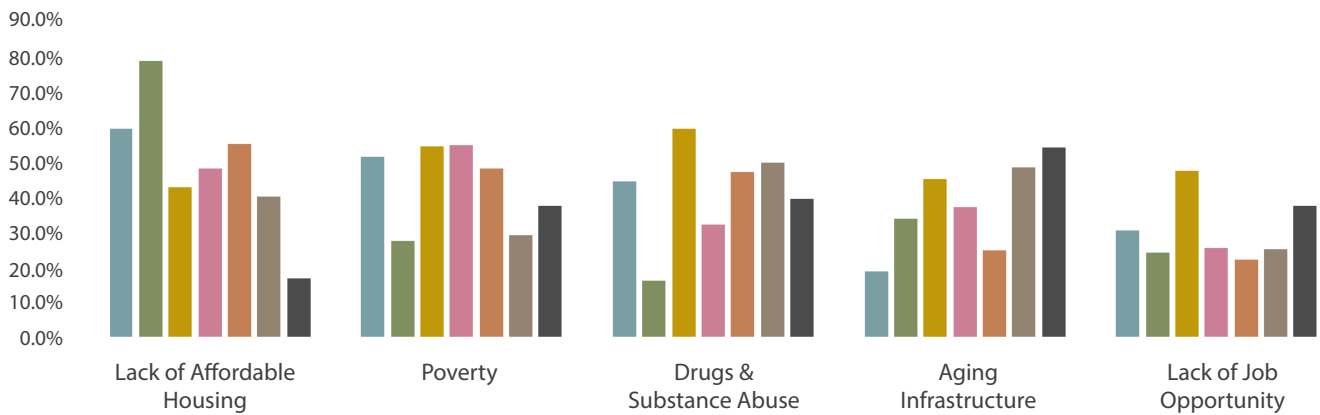
of Survey Responses by County



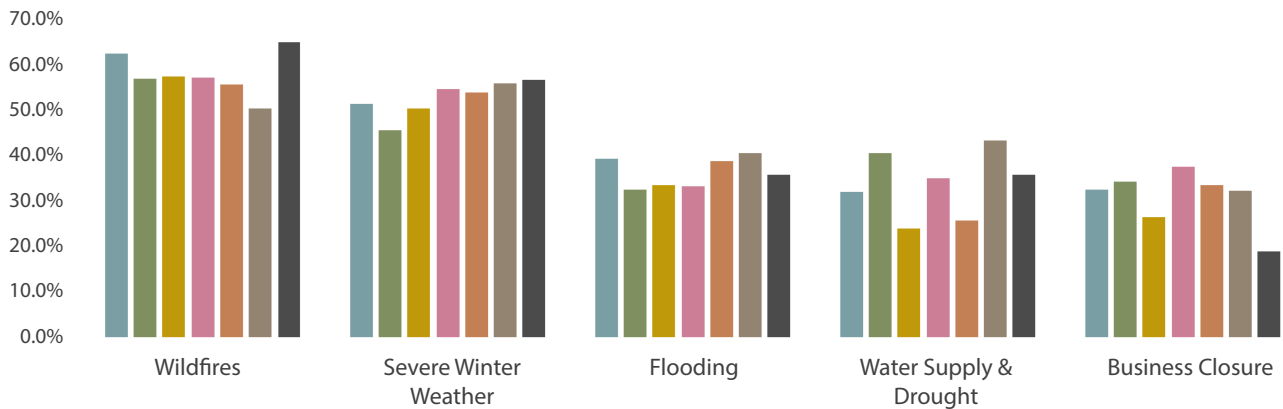
SURVEY RESULTS BY CLIMATE DIVISION



Q: In your opinion, which stressors have the largest impact in your community? Select the top three



Q: In your opinion, which shocks have the largest impact in your community? Select the top three



STEP 04

Assess
Vulnerabilities

Vulnerability Assessment

After public input has helped the Steering Committee identify the community's most pressing challenges and vital assets, it's time to take an in-depth look. A vulnerability assessment is a data-driven narrative and visual overview of the shocks and stressors facing your community. Prioritize the shocks and stressors that came up often during outreach and conduct research to understand impacts, trends and future projections. This assessment will serve as your foundation for developing resilience strategies in Step 06.

A helpful starting place is the statewide Montana Vulnerability Assessment, completed in 2019 (Appendix 3). The issues you evaluate may include some of the topics evaluated in the statewide assessment, and your committee may identify other issues of concern. The statewide assessment tracks some data trends across seven Montana regions, summarizing 23 shocks and stressors that Montana communities are experiencing.

Shocks

- Wildfires
- Severe Weather
- Flooding
- Business Closure
- Drought
- Infrastructure Aging and Failure
- Boom-Bust Economies
- Hazardous Material Exposure
- Missing and Murdered Native Women
- Earthquakes
- Death in the Community
- Commodity Price Fluctuation and Agricultural Dependency

Stressors

- Lack of Affordable Housing
- Substance Use Disorder
- Skilled Workforce Availability
- Availability of Mental Health Services
- Aging Population
- Lack of Available Childcare
- Lack of Volunteerism
- Lack of Community Connections
- Poor Access to Technology
- Climate Change Impacts to Montana's Water, Forests, and Agriculture

Many vulnerabilities in your community will have secondary impacts. For example, the Montana Climate Assessment documents that the earlier onset of snowmelt and spring runoff is reducing water availability in late summer, especially in snowmelt-dominated watersheds. Late-summer water shortages create strain on farmers and ranchers who rely on the water table or stream-fed irrigation to survive. Likewise, it stresses cold-water fisheries, threatens recreation businesses and the late-summer drought conditions increase wildfire risk. It is important to be aware of secondary impacts such as these when completing your assessment and prioritizing strategies.

Resources for Research

The Steering Committee and Working Groups can access many private, state and federal information sources, including some listed below, but don't overlook local wisdom and experience. Ask for input and assistance from community members who have direct knowledge about community and natural systems, including water, agriculture, forestry, tourism, housing, transportation, energy infrastructure, public health, emergency response, and economic development.

Keep your information well organized while preparing your assessment. For an efficient team effort, create shared spreadsheets for data management and research notes. The spreadsheet also will help you organize and track solutions as you develop specific resilience strategies in Step 06.

You can find state, federal, and non-governmental resilience resources in Appendix 6.

STEP 05

Evaluate Your Existing Community Plans

Categorize & Catalog

After establishing a set of goals, and before brainstorming new strategies to address community needs, take inventory of existing planning efforts within your jurisdiction. Many of the topics addressed in a resilience plan are addressed independently in other local planning documents. Appendix 5 has additional resources to help you leverage work that has already been done to address community needs and strengthen resilience.

Once you have compiled a set of existing planning documents, create a spreadsheet to track the issues, community needs and goals that are addressed. Take note of issues addressed in these plans that may not have been discussed during public meetings. Add those additional topics to your list of resilience plan needs and goals.

The outcome of this step is an organized table or spreadsheet that outlines existing plans in your community and identifies where strategies proposed in those plans overlap with goals established for your community's resilience framework.

Potential Planning Documents

- Growth Policy (or Comprehensive Plan)
- Capital Improvement Plan
- Multi-hazard Mitigation Plan
- Community Wildfire Protection Plan
- Downtown Master Plan
- Climate Adaptation or Mitigation Plan
- Housing Plan
- Regional Economic Development Plans

Potential Assessments

- Montana Economic Developers Association & Montana Business Expansion and Retention project (MEDA BEAR)
- Community Health Improvement Plans & Needs Assessments
- Other relevant local plans or needs assessments

STEP 06

Prioritize
Resilience Needs
and Develop
Strategies

Prioritize Resilience Needs

The Steering Committee should now be ready to compile a set of:

- Comprehensive Goals,
- Community Needs,
- Significant Vulnerabilities, and
- Existing Strategies.

Establish your project priorities by determining which community concerns pose the greatest risks to the community's health, economy and well-being. Now it's time to develop a set of actionable strategies to recommend to government agencies and community partners.

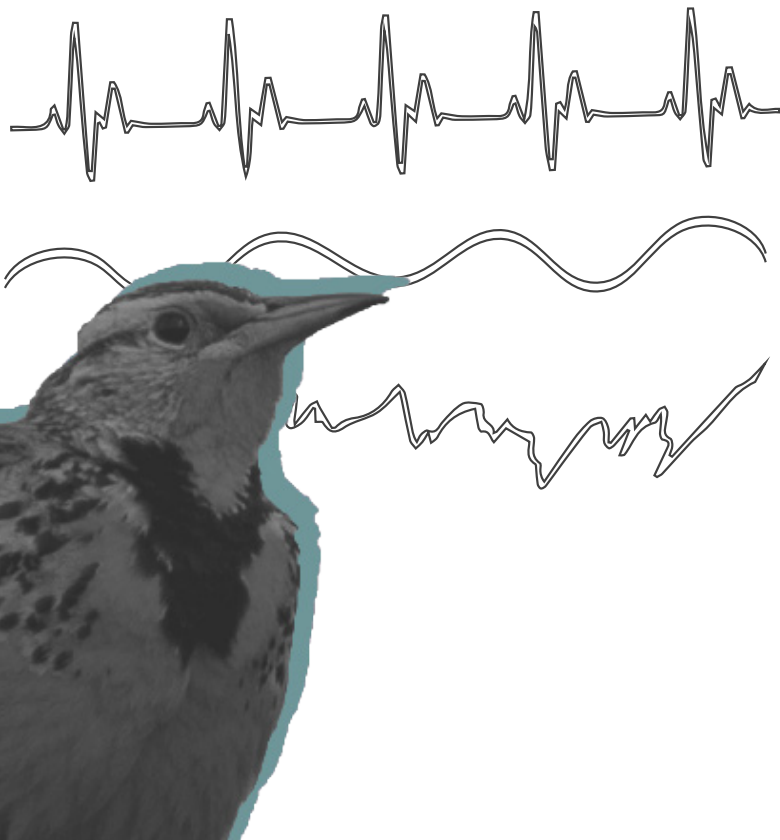
Starting Point

The Steering Committee and Working Groups are encouraged to engage community leaders and other non-profit and business experts to help identify actionable strategies. Likewise, Working Groups may invite community members to review the vulnerability assessment, help prioritize community needs, and develop strategies. Consider inviting people who attended and joined earlier conversations. Have attendees brainstorm and categorize strategies that address a list of community needs over a variety of timeframes, from immediate to long-term. Remember, you are using all the earlier work done in Steps 01-05.

It is important to collaborate across community sectors during this process. Cross-sector coordination and communication will reduce redundancy and encourage co-beneficial strategies.

Depending on the scope of your plan and attendance at working group meetings, this step could take one or many meetings. The outcome of this step is a set of working group recommendations that outline strategies to advance each resilience goal.

Appendix 4 offers resources and tools to help facilitate quality discussion at your working group meetings.



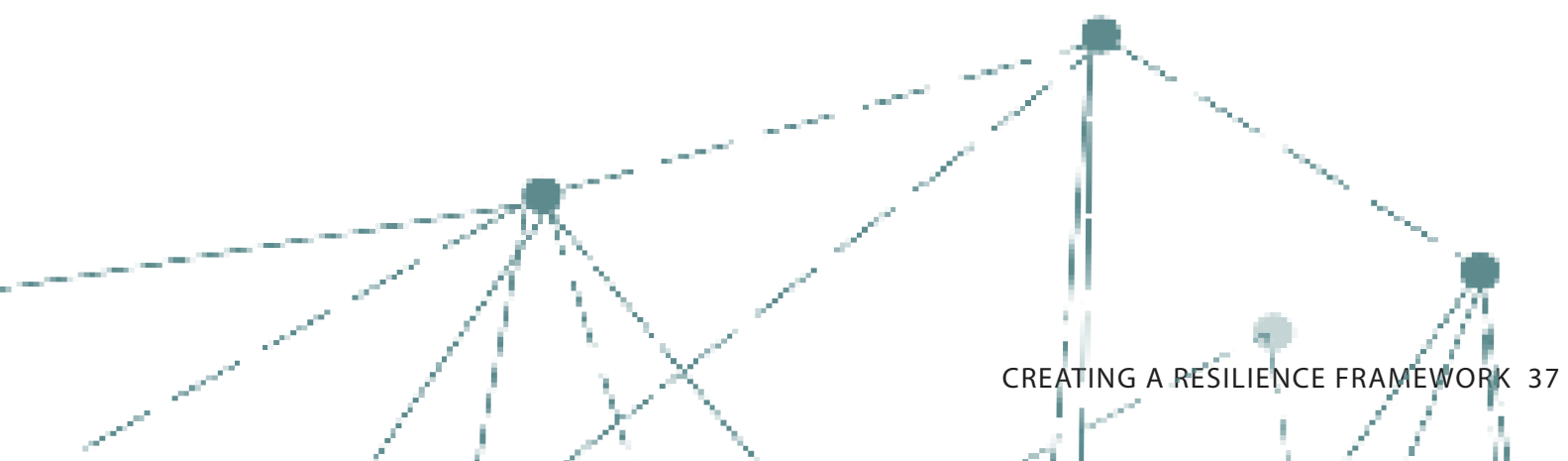
Utilize Existing Networks

Resources listed in Step 04 and Appendix 6 provide access to strategies adopted by other communities and state governments. Other sources of innovative approaches and community strategies can be found through state agencies and existing Montana networks.

1. Resources available from the state to determine and implement resilience strategies can be accessed through the Montana Department of [Commerce Community Technical Assistance Program](#)
2. Resilience strategies recommended through the [2020 Montana Climate Solutions Plan](#) are available through the [Montana Department of Environmental Quality](#)
3. Best practices and peer support from other communities around the state can be tapped through the [Climate Smart Montana Network](#), managed through the Institute on Ecosystems at Montana State University
4. Other private and public resources available to your community, including those listed in Chapter 4

Encourage your Working Groups to develop resilience strategies that support other community objectives. Integrated strategies include:

- Identify co-benefits that enhance multiple community sectors;
- Promote sustainable land-use practices;
- Diversify the local and regional economy;
- Protect vulnerable and at-risk populations; and
- Look for unanticipated opportunities during disruptive period.



As Working Groups transition from identifying vulnerabilities to developing solutions, participants should feel excited about the future they are helping plan. Working cooperatively on tangible solutions provides an opportunity to lift spirits and inspire hope during times of uncertainty. The work done today is preparing your community for a more sustainable future. And that is something to take pride in!

Strategy Review

After completing your working group meetings and developing a set of recommendations, the next step is for each member and the group as a whole to review the strategies to make sure that:

- 1) The intentions of Working Group members are expressed correctly.
- 2) Recommendations are actionable, feasible and relevant.
- 3) Internal review has been completed for content errors.

Your recommendations are now ready to submit to the Steering Committee for inclusion in a draft resilience plan for public review and comment.

STEP 07

Develop Your Plan

Resilience Plan

After completing the prior steps, your Steering Committee will be ready to finalize your community's resilience plan. While it is helpful to connect with other communities for inspiration and support, your plan will be unique to your community. You have already engaged community members to understand and identify their needs, assessed vulnerabilities, evaluated existing community plans, prioritized resilience needs, and developed actionable strategies. You may now compile all of that work into a well-organized and coherent resilience plan.

Check out these Montana community plans for inspiration and possible models for the look and feel of your plan.

Example Frameworks:

[Whitefish Climate Action Plan](#)

[Bozeman Climate Plan](#)

[Missoula County Resilience Plan](#)

[Helena Climate Change Task Force Action Plan](#)

What to Include

While there are various ways to organize and present your plan, it should include these elements:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1) Executive Summary | 6) Strategies |
| 2) Introduction | 7) Implementation Plan |
| 3) Community Visions & Priorities | 8) Conclusion |
| 4) Existing Community Plans | 9) Appendices |
| 5) Vulnerability Assessment | 10) References |

Review your Plan

You want your plan to have innovative and actionable solutions with clearly identified outcomes, a timeline for next steps, and a system to measure progress. Does your plan address these questions?

Strategies and Actions

How are you going to create change in your community?

Desired Outcomes

What will those changes look like?

Metrics

What are the indicators you will use to assess the changes?

Methods

How will you measure the changes on a regular basis?

Public Review

After drafting your plan and before officially publishing it, the final step is to invite public review. In addition to ensuring accuracy and assessing feasibility, the public review process will help build community ownership in the plan. It also will begin to engage community members in the critical implementation phase as they may raise practical questions, such as:

How will we raise the funds to invest in these strategies?

Do we need to adopt new public policies?

Who is responsible for carrying out this plan?

What is the role of local government and non-governmental partners?

Outlets for Public Review:

- Post a digital version of the draft online, or send it out in an email and ask for comments and edits. Make hard copies available at the library and county courthouse. Set a deadline for comments, typically 30-45 days.
- Hold a public comment session where people can review the document and give their suggestions.
- Distribute the draft to other communities who have previously engaged in resilience planning and ask for additional suggestions.

After receiving feedback from the public, discuss suggestions as a Steering Committee, make desired edits, and finalize.

STEP 08

Implement and Assess

Publish & Promote

You are now ready to publish the final plan and promote its use in your community.

Promotion Platforms

Consider using the following platforms to publicize the final plan and promote implementation by local government, economic and business organizations, and natural resource managers.

- 1) Print and distribute the document to key implementation partners identified during working group meeting.
- 2) Hold a public meeting to launch the document and distribute copies.
- 3) Post a digital version of the document on social media and partner websites. Encourage Steering Committee and Working Group members to do the same.
- 4) Distribute to surrounding communities currently engaged in resilience planning.

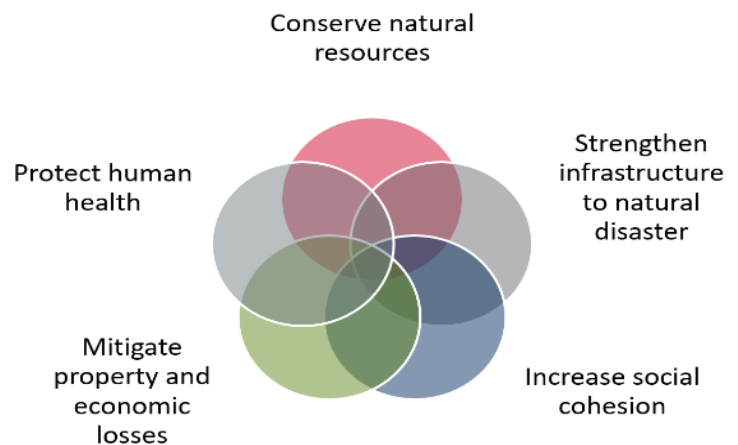
Outreach Materials

Although the full plan will likely be a fascinating page turner, not everybody in your community is likely to read it cover to cover. Recruit someone with design skills to create condensed outreach materials to summarize your action plan. Infographics, brochures and social media images can make your resilience plan accessible and digestible for all community members.

Consolidating your plan into simple, compelling graphics can be a challenge because resilience is inherently a multi-dimensional concept that integrates many issues, strategies, and partners.

The [Bozeman resilience plan](#) adopted in 2020 illustrates its overlapping strategies and benefits with a simple image.

Resiliency Goals



Source: Bozeman Climate Plan

Check out the [Whitefish Road Map to Resilience](#) trifold for additional inspiration.

Implementation Team

The original Steering Committee or a separate implementation committee should be designated to track progress implementing the action plan. The implementation team should include all partners with responsibilities under the plan. It is important to stay active during the implementation process to ensure continued community support.

Here are some tips to maintain momentum:

Schedule Regular Meetings

Meet quarterly, biannually, or annually to track progress and provide yearly updates to the community.

Select a Coordinator

The implementation team will be most effective if it designates a coordinator to maintain communications, schedule meetings, and check in with partners. The coordinator could be a local government staff member or the team may designate a non-profit organization to provide ongoing coordination. Or partners may choose to establish a new non-profit group.

Request Official Support

A letter of support or intent to implement from a local elected official and project partners is a great way for the community to hold itself accountable for implementing the strategies.

Update and Improve

Consider establishing a 5-year review to revise the plan. Use this opportunity to assess progress made to date, re-evaluate community needs, and refine strategies.

Pursue Grant Opportunities

If the implementation team has staff capacity or an AmeriCorps Vista member research grant opportunities and apply for funds to tackle projects. There are a wide variety of funding opportunities to invest in your community's future, and many of these resources will be more accessible because you have a formal community resilience plan.

Incorporate Strategies in Other Community Plans

Add the resilience plan as an appendix to your community growth policy. Include specific resilience strategies within your growth policy, capital improvements plan, economic development blueprint, and other planning documents.

Leverage your Plan

Think big! Once your framework has been accepted by the community and work has begun to implement strategies, you will find many opportunities to strengthen community cooperation, leverage funding opportunities, and network with other Montana communities. The completion of your community's resilience plan is just the beginning.

Conclusion

Congratulations, you have helped your community take a major first step to make your community a more equitable and resilient place for future generations. While the future will continue to present unexpected challenges, your efforts to anticipate, prepare and determine your own destiny will open up exciting opportunities along the way. As the network of resilient communities continues to grow across the state, Montana will remain a wonderful place to call home!



Appendices

Appendix 1: Stakeholder Identification

Appendix 2: Example Survey

Appendix 3: *Coming Soon*

Montana Vulnerability Assessment

Appendix 4: Materials for Workshops and Meetings

Appendix 5: Integrating Resilience into a Growth Policy

APPENDIX 1: STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION



Below is a starting point of groups and individuals to may reach out to, to gather input on your community. The list is not comprehensive and should be tailored to your local community.

American Red Cross	Local Housing Authorities
Association of Floodplain Managers	Local Planning Departments
Banks, Credit Unions	Local Watershed Groups and Nonprofits
Bike Walk Montana	Local Chamber of Commerce
Certified Regional Development Corporations	Media Outlets
Churches/Faith Centers	Montana Association of Counties
Conservation Districts	Montana Association of Planners
County Health Departments	Montana Building Industry Association
Department of Environmental Quality Regional Offices	Montana Community Foundation
Department of Emergency Services Local Emergency Managers	Montana Economic Developers Association
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Regional Offices	Montana Healthcare Foundation
Department of Public Health & Human Services Regional Offices	Montana Infrastructure Coalition
Education (schools, colleges)	Montana Watershed Coordination Council
Electric Cooperatives	MSU Extension Agents
Environmental Protection Agency Regional Offices	Northwestern Energy
Farm Bureau	Regional Fish Wildlife & Parks offices
Farmers Union	Regional Montana Department of Transportation Offices
Food and Ag Development Centers	Regional Tourism Offices, CVB, TBIDS
Food Banks	Small Business Development Center Network
Homeless Shelters	Tribal Cultural/Historic Preservation groups
Human Resources Development Councils	Tribal Government/Council
Humane Society	Tribal Health Departments
Job Services Offices	USDA Farm Service Agency offices
Land Trusts	USGS
League of Cities and Towns	Utilities
Local Elected Officials (city and county)	United Way
Local Emergency Planning Committees	Salvation Army
	Workforce Development

APPENDIX 2: EXAMPLE SURVEY



1. Identifying Stressors:

In your opinion, which stressors have the largest impact in your community? Select the top 3.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poverty | <input type="checkbox"/> Crime & Safety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor Population Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Homelessness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low Performing Education System | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Affordable Housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Community Ties | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Job Opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacant and Abandoned Properties |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aging Infrastructure | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Long-Term Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Racial Tension | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Economic Diversity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drug Epidemic | <input type="checkbox"/> Invasive Species |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decline of Natural Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor Water Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Climate Change | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Affordability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Policies (Please specify in question 2) | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable |

Other (please specify)

2. Please expand on any specific issues you have experienced or seen related to the stressors identified above.

3. Identifying Shocks:

In your opinion, which shocks have the potential to have the largest impact in your community? Select the top 3.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfires | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Closure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flooding | <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure Failure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Earthquakes | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous Materials Exposure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drought | <input type="checkbox"/> Disease Outbreak |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Severe Winter Weather | <input type="checkbox"/> Cyber Attacks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Severe Summer Weather | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable |

Other (please specify)

4. Please expand on any specific issues you have experienced or seen related to the shocks identified above.

5. Local Support:

Considering the previous questions, if you have experienced these challenges in your life, which community groups/institutions did you turn to for help? (Select all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Church or faith-based organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sport or hobby groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural affinity groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood-based organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> Schools or colleges |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Support groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Family and friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government agencies or programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

6. Community Leadership:

Which groups demonstrate strong leadership in your community?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Citizens | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious Organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit/Philanthropy | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Institutions | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

7. Briefly describe any successful resilience projects or efforts your community has implemented or is planning to implement.

* 8. In what ZIP code is your home located? (enter 5-digit ZIP code)

9. Please select your age group:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 18 to 24 | <input type="radio"/> 55 to 64 |
| <input type="radio"/> 25 to 34 | <input type="radio"/> 65 to 74 |
| <input type="radio"/> 35 to 44 | <input type="radio"/> 75 or older |
| <input type="radio"/> 45 to 54 | |

10. Which race/ethnicity best describes you? (Optional)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native | <input type="radio"/> Hispanic |
| <input type="radio"/> Asian / Pacific Islander | <input type="radio"/> White / Caucasian |
| <input type="radio"/> Black or African American | <input type="radio"/> Prefer not to answer |
| <input type="radio"/> Multiple ethnicity / Other (please specify) | |

11. Which of the following categories best describes your role in your community?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Citizen | <input type="checkbox"/> Private business owner or employee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local government employee | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit organization employee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State or federal government employee | <input type="checkbox"/> Student |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

12. (Optional)

Montana Ready Communities Initiative (MRCI) will be hosting multiple regional resilience summits in the coming months. If you are interested in participating in a summit, provide your name and contact information below.

More information on these summits: <https://comdev.mt.gov/Programs/MontanaReadyCommunities>

If you prefer to provide your contact information over email you can reach us [HERE](#)

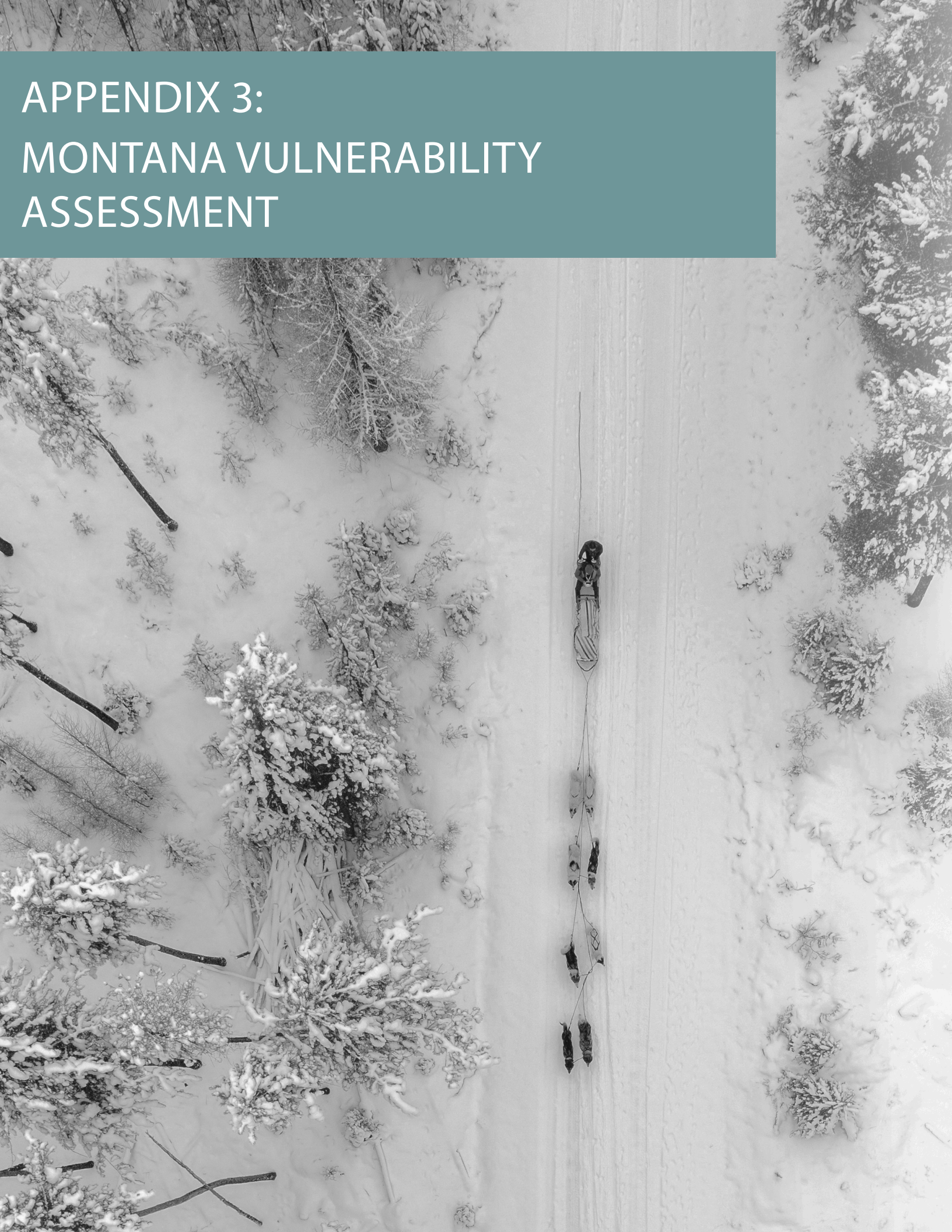
Name

Organization

Email Address

Phone Number

APPENDIX 3: MONTANA VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT



COMING SOON

VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT ENDNOTES



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APPENDIX 4: MATERIALS FOR WORKSHOPS AND MEETINGS



WORKSHOP RESOURCES

Optional resources to hold your own community workshop.

AT LEAST ONE MONTH PRIOR TO THE EVENT:

- Set date and location for meeting
- Send out invitations and meeting announcement to regional contacts
- Send reminders two weeks prior, one week prior, and day before

WORKSHOP AGENDA EXAMPLE: (EACH WORKSHOP IS APPROXIMATELY 2.5 HOURS)

0:00 – Welcome, introductions, and goals for workshop

- Icebreaker question: Name, Organization, “What does it mean to be a Montanan?” in one word
- Project overview and Resiliency Framework
- Defining Resilience
- PowerPoint Presentation see Appendix 2.1 Edit the slides to include regional data and relevant case studies.

0:30 – Shocks and Stressors

- Large group activity to identify shocks and stresses
- Large sheet or whiteboard with listed shocks and stresses
- Brief definition of the list
- Participants use sticky dots to “vote” for most relevant shocks and stresses in community

1:00 – Sector Discussion (See Appendix 2.3 for an in-depth outline of these activities)

- Split into sector groups
- Shocks and Stressors worksheet see Appendix 2.4
- What happens when shocks and stresses combine?
- What local organizations and efforts have been effective?
- What are action items to address some of the gaps?

1:25 – Large group discussion on worksheet see Appendix 2.4

- Each sector group reports their findings
- Facilitate communications between sectors stakeholders to identify themes

2:10 – Open Discussion up to Q&A

2:30 – Meeting adjourned

WORKSHOP FOLLOW-UP

Meeting notes and worksheets should be compiled and organized by the hosting organization and distributed to the attendees by using the sign-in sheet. Strategies and action plans from each workshop may be developed at follow-up meetings.

SHOCKS & STRESSORS ACTIVITY

TIME: 70-85 MIN

RESOURCES NEEDED:

- White sticky easel pads
- Markers
- Circle dot stickers or small post-its

Facilitator will first define resilience, shocks and stressors and provide some examples.

1. Facilitator will ask participants to call out relevant shocks in their community (e.g. flood, severe winter weather) [5 min]
2. Facilitator writes each shock on the white sheet or board, leaving plenty of space between each
3. After group decides that list is complete, facilitator follows the same process for the list of stressors [5 min]
4. After both lists are complete, participants will use 6 stickers to “vote” for the top 3 shocks and top 3 stressors that have the greatest potential to impact their community
5. After 5 minutes of voting, facilitator will briefly discuss the results and circle the top shocks and stressors [10 min].

The voting period is a good time to take a short break and let people get snacks or use the restroom.

COMMUNITY SECTOR ACTIVITY

After a brief introduction of the six sectors, participants will self-assign themselves to sector groups for the next portion of the activity. We found it helpful to print out tokens with each of the sector names on them and distributing them across a set of tables so participants could visualize where each group was sitting. Each group will complete the worksheet questions together. Use the following list to present the groups. Sectors may be combined for small workshops. [30 minutes]

WATERSHEDS & NATURAL RESOURCES:

Focus on the interaction between our built and natural environments. This includes the negative impact our built environment has on Montana's natural resources, as well as the effect that these resources may have on our infrastructure, water quality, and social wellbeing.

INFRASTRUCTURE:

Addresses the potential risks posed to Montana's interconnected network of critical services by engineering public infrastructure projects made with the foresight and risk aversion needed to bounce back from an acute shock.

HOUSING:

Provide safe, affordable, and decent housing for vulnerable members of our community; housing that promotes healthy community interaction while supplying safe and reliable shelter.

HEALTH & SOCIAL:

Integrate the efforts of public health, healthcare providers and facilities, and social service networks to promote the health and wellness needs of the whole community and create more resilient and sustainable systems for citizens.

ECONOMY:

To sustain and/or rebuild businesses, preserve or create jobs, and develop economic opportunities that result in sustainable and economically resilient communities that meet local needs.

COMMUNITY:

To build State and local capabilities and resources that facilitate holistic pre- and post-disaster recovery planning, effective implementation, and community resiliency and sustainability.

After discussion, a representative from each group will briefly report out on their responses [15-30 min]. Facilitator will take note of comments made on each of these sector sheets and move into the wrap-up. Ask participants for any closing thoughts or comments and thank them for attending. Remind them to write their email address on the sign-in sheet if they want to receive a summary of the discussion.

Montana Ready Communities Initiative Regional Summit Worksheet



Date:

Sector Group:

Of the shocks and stressors identified in the last activity, which are most relevant in your sector? What happens when these shocks and stresses combine in your sector? (Who is most impacted? How does this ripple out to the larger community?)

How are local community leaders currently working to address these shocks and stressors in your sector? Please note any specific resources or services to address these issues.

Considering the currently available support/services/ resources listed above, identify any gaps or areas for improvement.

COMMENT CARD

We offered comments card to offer attendees who didn't have a chance to participate in the formal conversations, had more input to share, and who wanted to receive updates on the planning process.

LOCAL RESILIENCY SUMMIT COMMENT FORM	
Contact Information (Optional)	Name:
Phone:	E-Mail:
Comment:	

WORKSHOP CHECKLIST

SET-UP CHECKLIST FOR WORKSHOP

- ☐ Arrange tables and chairs (small groups is ideal)
- ☐ Set up projector, laptop, power point presentation
- ☐ Sign-in sheet with pen at front table
- ☐ Agendas at sign-in table
- ☐ Set out snacks and water
- ☐ Set out sector worksheets
- ☐ Name tents and markers
- ☐ Set out additional resources and contact cards
- ☐ Make sheet for parking lot questions/topics
- ☐ Set up easel stands with white pads

MATERIALS TO BRING

- ☐ Laptop
- ☐ Projector
- ☐ Extension cord
- ☐ Markers & Pens
- ☐ Blank nametags
- ☐ Sign-in sheet
- ☐ Agendas
- ☐ Snacks/water
- ☐ Easel sticky sheets and easels
- ☐ Worksheets for shocks/stressors
- ☐ Sticky dots or post-its
- ☐ Hard copies of presentation
- ☐ Additional resources
- ☐ Business cards
- ☐ Audio recorder
- ☐ Clicker for presentation
- ☐ Comment cards
- ☐ Tape (paint friendly)

FIRST WORKING GROUP MEETING

MEETING AGENDA EXAMPLE:

0:00 – Welcome, introductions

- Make sure all attendees have 2-3 minutes to introduce themselves, and describe what perspective they bring to the Working Groups. It is important to give everyone an opportunity to introduce themselves to foster an understanding of the individuals in the room.

0:20 - Project Overview

- Presentation on what resilience is
- Presentation on the goals of the project (what are you doing)
- Overview of the public outreach process and results
- Questions and Discussion

0:50 – Establishing Community Needs

- Bring a printed out list of the community needs being addressed by the working group
- Have working group members pair up and discuss any topics missing from the list.
- Give working group members a chance to brainstorm and write down any community needs they would like to add to the list (10 min)
- Have every working group member report out any needs they think are relevant to add or edit (10-30 min)
- Write down additions on a white page or collective word document

1:30 – Setting Goals

- Split the group into 3-5 sub groups
- Have each group work to categorize the community needs into a set of 3-5 goals (~10 min)
- Have each group report out their goals and note each down on a white board (10 - 20 min)

2:00 – Open Discussion up to Q&A

2:15 – Meeting adjourned

MEETING FOLLOW-UP

- Meeting notes should be compiled and organized by the hosting organization and distributed to the attendees
- The planning team should independently develop 3-5 goals based on working group input and ideas and have the working group further edit or approve the decided goals in the follow-up meeting
- The planning team should distribute the finalized set of community needs along with draft goals
- The planning team should work on identifying existing community plans to identify how existing planning efforts are already addressing the finalized list of community needs



APPENDIX 5: INTEGRATING RESILIENCE INTO A GROWTH POLICY

OVERVIEW

This document is a guide on how to increase community resilience by incorporating resilience considerations into a community growth policy or comprehensive plan. The document provides tools, resources, and guidelines on best practices to follow when updating a community growth policy to address local resilience challenges.

Intended Audience

“Integrating Resilience into a Growth Policy” is intended to be used by local county, city or town planning boards and private contracting firms to incorporate resilience considerations into a community growth policy.

Resources:

The Montana Department of Commerce Community Development Block Grant program provides matching grants to local governments for the preparation of Growth Policies and other planning documents mentioned in this publication. For more information contact:

CDBG Program - Housing and Public Facilities
Commerce/ Community Development Division

301 South Park Avenue - P.O Box 200523
Helena, MT 59620-0523
Phone (406) 841-2770

Website:
comdev.mt.gov

ELEMENTS OF A GROWTH POLICY

Benefits of Planning for Growth:

- Reduces increases in taxes and fees through more efficient provision of services
- Fosters wise and thoughtful investments in major public facilities, such as roads, water and sewer systems, solid waste, and fire protection
- Makes communities safer and healthier by encouraging well-designed streets, protecting water quality, and deterring development in unsuitable areas such as floodplains, wetlands, fault zones, and unstable slopes
- Helps make a community more attractive to investment by business and industry
- Protects special community values, such as historic, cultural, scenic and natural features, or rural agricultural character
- Builds public consensus and greater understanding of issues within the community
- Promotes affordable housing
- Ensures that adequate amounts of suitable land are available for residential, commercial, and industrial growth
- Maintains property values for residential, commercial, and industrial properties by preventing nearby incompatible or degrading uses

Referenced from the Montana Environmental Quality Council report "Planning for Growth in Montana"

Growth Policy Background

Montana's cities and towns have been authorized to adopt master plans or comprehensive plans since 1957 and counties since 1971. Prior to 1999, statute allowed the creation of these plans and provided suggested guidance on elements that could be included. In 1999, the Legislature passed a law that revised the name of comprehensive plans or master plans to "growth policies" and outlined a series of minimum requirements and elements that must be included in the plan. The goal of implementing minimum requirements to the growth policy was to increase its relevance and consistency when used as a device to indirectly regulate future community development. Montana's Environmental Quality Council (EQC) introduced the 1999 bill that included required components to the growth policy in hopes that growth policies would "provide a framework for implementation activities, including capital improvements planning and subdivision regulation."

Even with updated required components included in the growth policy, the development and adoption of a growth policy is optional. There is no penalty if a local government does not have a compliant growth policy in place. However, failure to adopt a growth policy can have implications on the community's ability to adopt or amend zoning regulations. Communities that fail to plan also miss out on many of the benefits outlined in the figure to the left. Foresight and planning are essential to addressing resilience challenges facing Montana's communities. This guide offers recommendations on how to increase your community's resilience by integrating relevant economic, environmental, and social considerations into your community's growth policy. Under Montana statute, planning boards are the only public entities authorized to prepare growth policies.

REQUIRED COMPONENTS

Section 76-1-601, MCA identifies several elements that must be addressed as part one of the growth policy. The statute does not define the extent to which each element must be described. The required elements are:

1. Community goals and objectives;
2. Maps and text that describe the existing characteristics and features of the jurisdictional area (including information on land uses, population, housing needs, economic conditions, local services, public facilities, natural resources, and other characteristics);
3. Projected trends for each of the above-listed elements for the life of the growth policy (except public facilities);
4. A description of the policies, regulations, and other tools to be implemented in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the growth policy;
5. A strategy for development, maintenance, and replacement of public infrastructure, including drinking water systems, wastewater treatment facilities, sewer systems, solid waste facilities, fire protection facilities, roads, and bridges;
6. An implementation strategy that includes:
 - o a timetable for implementing the growth policy;
 - o a list of conditions that will lead to a revision of the growth policy;
 - o a timetable for reviewing the growth policy at least once every 5 years and revising the policy if necessary;
7. An explanation of how the governing body will coordinate and cooperate with other jurisdictions (i.e., cities with surrounding counties and vice versa); and

REQUIRED COMPONENTS

8. An explanation of how the governing body will evaluate and make decisions regarding proposed subdivisions with respect to the “public interest” criteria established in section 76-3-608 (3)(a), MCA. The public interest criteria are agriculture, agricultural water user facilities, local services, the natural environment, wildlife and wildlife habitat, and public health and safety;
9. A statement explaining how public hearings regarding proposed subdivisions will be conducted.
10. An evaluation of the potential for fire and wildland fire in the jurisdictional area that includes:
 - Delineation of the wildland-urban interface; and
 - Adoption of regulations that require:
 - defensible space for structures;
 - ingress and egress to facilitate fire suppression; and
 - adequate water supplies for fire protection

POTENTIAL ELEMENTS

While the subjects outlined prior are required elements to the growth policy document, current statute allows for growth policies to address relevant issues outside the scope of the required elements. This document outlines 1.) recommended items to add to the statutorily required elements outlined 2.) best practices when compiling the growth policy 3.) additional topics that would be beneficial for communities to address in their growth policy documents. 4.) other resources and best practices available for communities looking to address their community's unique shock and stressors within their growth policy.

The document is divided into sections that outline specific activities a community can participate in and information that is useful to add to a community's growth policy to increase local resilience to economic, environmental and social shock events.

Expand on
Required
Elements

COMMUNITY INVENTORY & TRENDS

Montana statute requires that growth policies “inventory existing characteristics and features” through a use of maps and text, which includes information on land uses, populations, housing needs, economic conditions, local services, public facilities, natural resources, and other characteristics and features proposed by the planning board and adopted by the governing body. Growth policies must describe projected long-term trends for each of the inventory items and other elements proposed by the planning board and adopted by the governing body. The inventory and projection sections are usually completed together under each topic area. The following section outlines the required elements of the inventory and trends section and offers recommendations on items to include in these sections to increase a community’s resilience to adverse shock events.

1.



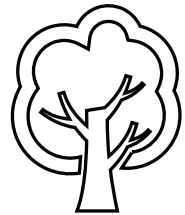
Mapping

4.



Economic Conditions

7.



Natural Resources

2.



Population

5.



Local Services

8.



Transportation

3.



Housing Needs

6.



Public Facilities

9.



CDBG Requirements



LAND USE MAPPING

A community's first step to create a growth policy is to obtain a comprehensive base map of the community. Creating a base map can assist in developing future maps and land use planning. Base maps include base-layer attributes of the community and constraints to community development:

Examples of Base Layers:

- Transportation routes
- Platted streets
- Waterways
- City blocks
- Public and private property
- Boundaries of the planning area

Examples of Constraints:

- Floodplains
- High hazard areas
- Wetlands
- Steep slopes
- Shallow depth to groundwater
- Important wildlife habitats
- Distance to services

Base maps provide information that is essential to develop well-informed land use maps. The purpose of land use maps is to visually display existing land-use patterns, constraints and opportunities and to provide direction for future development. Land use maps also help a community in meeting the statutory requirements that a growth policy contain maps and textures describing existing and projected land uses. Quality land use maps depend on quality complementary base maps. A community can better plan for projected growth that acknowledges and addresses the development constraints and hazards when these community features are outlined in the base maps and overlaid with land use maps.

Base and land use maps are commonly compiled via GIS mapping, so the data between layers can be easily analyzed and manipulated. In addition to digital mapping, consider printing out a series of large scale land use maps with relevant constraint layers overlaid (i.e. WUI, Floodplain) for continual reference by planners in your community.

INCORPORATING RESILIENCE

Account for Future Growth Potential:

Along with a base map of the current area, municipalities should consider planning for the future growth of their community and map out the area's surrounding the jurisdiction. Planning for growth ensures that the area can expand comfortably over time.

Mapping the Wildland Urban Interface:


The Wildfire-Urban Interface (WUI) is expanding as cities get larger, and areas get more prone to wildfires (US Forest Service 2015). In 2007 the state Legislature passed a bill that requires communities provide "an evaluation of the potential for fire and wildland fire in the jurisdictional area that includes: a.) delineation of the wildland-urban interface; and b.) adoption of regulation that requires: defensible space for structures, ingress, and egress to facilitate fire suppression, and adequate water supply for fire protection" within their growth policy. While it is required to provide an evaluation of the potential for fire in your community, it is within the power of the local jurisdiction to decide how extensively they address this within their growth policy.

Consider mapping the full extent of the wildland-urban interface as an overlay on the land use map in your community. In communities prone to wildfire, all future development should acknowledge the current and future hazard conditions in their community. An overlay of a WUI map on your communities future and current land use map should be a staple feature that informs all future development in your jurisdiction.

Mapping Your Community's Floodplain:


The effects of climate change are altering the hazard risk for flooding events as well as wildfires (Source: Montana Climate Assessment). As with wildfire hazard mappings, communities should consider creating future and current land use maps with FEMA floodplain overlays to inform future development. As with development in the WUI, development in a designated floodplain has the potential to increase future hazard risk. As impermeable development continues in a flood or wildfire-prone area, the exposure risk for others in the community is also increased by means of increased runoff and increased fire fuel respectively. In addition to mapping current conditions of these hazard areas, future conditions as a result of climate change and continued development ought to be reflected in the communities base maps. Mapping activities that increase the communities awareness of flood risk can decrease community members' flood insurance costs under the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System (Source: CRS Manual)

Other Elements to Include on your Base and Land Use Maps:



Vulnerable Populations

- Affordable housing developments
- Schools
- Hospitals
- Homeless shelters



Critical Facilities

- Energy infrastructure
- Wastewater treatment
- Landfills
- Data centers
- Healthcare facilities
- Government facilities
- Educational institutions

Potential Growth Policy Strategies and Actions:

1. Identify data needs to map current and future hazard conditions in the community
2. Update zoning code to reflect appropriate land uses within current and expected hazard areas.
3. Limit building in high-risk areas through the adoption and enforcement of stringent building codes
4. Create hazard maps that outline expected future conditions of wildfire, flooding, drought and other hazard risks with respect to climate change and development trends.
5. Create and distribute public-facing maps to educate the community on the hazards facing them directly
- Best Practice: Hazard Ready Missoula provides public facing hazard data to residents of Missoula and offers resources and recommendations for individuals to increase their resilience source: hazardready.org/missoula/



POPULATION

Population projections are a critical element when planning for future conditions in a community. A community's population level and demographics can help determine future service demand, taxable income, future economic conditions, and other relevant factors to consider when planning for a communities development. This section generally includes visual data sections such as maps and tables that outline current and predicted demographic trends in the community. This mapping helps visualize cultural relationships with income, housing, employment, and other measurable variables.

INCORPORATING RESILIENCE

Distance to Services:

Consider adding data that maps community services such as health care, education, low-income assistance, mental health services, quality food, and open spaces with reference to demographic data such as income level. Consider adding concentric circles around these services on a GIS map to visualize distance with reference to income level by census block or household.

Demographic Trends to Consider:

Consider mapping the concentration of individuals by income level, race, or cultural distinction to develop an idea of emerging social development trend in your community and equip your staff with the tools to analyze and engage these trends with the community.

Vulnerable Populations in Hazard Areas:

Consider taking account of development trends by population demographics within the floodplain and wildland-urban interface. Use this data to map trends of population development in these areas to help inform policy and target resources to address this development and ensure the future safety of individuals living in these areas.

Potential Growth Policy Strategies and Actions:

1. Maintain data on demographic trends in relations to community services including: health care, open space, food, low-income assistance, etc.
2. Compile data on clustered demographic trends in the community
3. Compile data on development trends in high hazard areas and the demographics of individuals who are building in these areas.

The Montana Department of Commerce Census and Economic Information Center is an important source for population, economic, and housing data.



HOUSING NEEDS

In 2018, the Montana Department of Commerce released a state-wide resilience survey to identify resilience challenges in communities across Montana. The most regularly reported stressor in this survey was “a lack of affordable housing,” which over 50% of all respondents noted as the main stressor in their community. The housing element of a growth policy typically discusses the need for different housing types, current and projected market conditions, housing quality the location of housing in a community. Information on housing is compiled by the U.S Census Bureau and the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development.

INCORPORATING RESILIENCE

Distance to Services:

Consider access to existing and expected future development of services and when developing future land use maps for your community. In this section consider cataloging access to services for current and future housing developments.

Hazard Area Mapping:

Take inventory of housing developments in areas with flood or wildfire hazards in your community. Consider targeting flood education outreach to individuals living in hazard areas and working with the community to zone these parcel with uses more in line with public safety, such as open space, to limit dangerous development in the future.

Renovation of Historical Properties:

Consider taking inventory of historic properties in your community, developing historic overlay districts, and working with your local community, government, and developers to leverage federal and state incentives to preserve historic buildings when developing housing developments in your community.

Potential Growth Policy Strategies and Actions:

1. Develop a housing plan for the community that outlines future housing development that addresses hazards, accessibility, historic preservation and access to community services *

2. Work to become a member of the “Certified Local Government” program/ work to develop historic preservation overlay districts

3. Target education and outreach to individuals within residentially zoned districts that experience flood or wildfire hazard risk.

* The Montana Department of Commerce Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program has published a manual entitled Designing and Initiating a Small Community Housing Program. This book outlines information on conducting a housing needs assessment, and an easy step-by-step process for assembling a housing plan.



ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The economic condition section of the growth policy outlines a wide range of income and employment information for the community. This section outlines where the economy currently is, where it is moving, and where the local community wants it to be.

This section commonly outlines employment as either “primary” or “secondary” employment. Primary employment refers to a business that commonly provides services or good to persons outside of the community, examples include mining, manufacturing, technological businesses, tourism, etc. Secondary employment refers to the services provided to individuals within the economy (ex. retail, food service, entertainment). The existence of secondary services usually depends on the original provision of primary services to drive the demand for local consumption.

The income element of the economic conditions section commonly utilizes graphs, charts, and maps to outline median household income and per capita income of community members.

INCORPORATING RESILIENCE

Economic Diversification:

Consider adding data that outlines the community’s reliance on primary industries. A non-diverse economy might have one large primary employer that supports a myriad of secondary employers that may not be viable in the absence of the primary industry. A growth policy should address their reliance on a primary employer to support secondary businesses in the community and acknowledge alternatives to diversify the economy in the event the primary employer decrease its economic productivity.

Track Youth Retention and Migration

Consider tracking rates of youth migration in your community to identify areas where young people are either coming to your community to participate in areas where future population trends may not be able to sustain current economic outputs. The Montana Department of Labor and Industry and the U.S Census Bureau provide statistics on youth out-migration and workforce retention.

Acknowledge and Plan for Boom Bust Cycles

If a significant primary employer in your community is reliant on global market trends such as mining, oil development, natural resource extraction, etc. consider a focus on planning for boom-bust cycles in your community’s growth policy.

Account for Regional Economic Conditions

Consider taking account of regional economic trends to assess the role of your community in the regional economy and identify areas where the community could position itself in the future to meet the needs of the regional economy. For example, tourism economies in communities surrounding the national parks would benefit from a general trend analysis of visitor rate to communities in the region to capitalize on their community’s niche role in the regional economy.

Hazard Area Mapping:

Forty percent of small businesses that close as the result of a natural disaster never re-open (FEMA). Consider inventorying businesses within flood and wildfire hazard areas in your community. Mapping the vulnerability of community businesses has many benefits. 1.) the local government can target outreach and resources for continuity planning to businesses with assets within designated hazard areas 2.) future land use maps can acknowledge the hazard and work with the community to find appropriate future land uses for the parcel (with an emphasis on open space preservation if possible) 3.) generally have the information to direct future community development outside of these areas.

Renovation of Historic Properties:

Consider taking inventory of historic properties in your community, developing historic overlay districts, and working with your local community, government, and developers to leverage federal and state incentives to preserve historic buildings when developing commercial real estate in the community.

Potential Growth Policy Strategies and Actions:

1. Identify and reach out to small business owners within the WUI and designated floodplain to provide resources and training regarding continuity planning and creating defensible spaces
2. Leverage a variety of state and federal tax incentives to promote business development in low-hazard, high need, and ample opportunity areas within your community
3. Track youth migration rates in your community and consider specific programs to promote retention and recruitment
4. Work with regional partners to develop tourism plans that spread the impact of the tourism economy across the region
5. Acknowledge the potential for boom-bust cycles associated with local resource extraction industries and develop an economic strategy to leverage the short-term income from the industry to diversify your local economy and ensure long-range economic vitality for future generations of your community.



LOCAL SERVICES

An understanding of the availability of public, health, safety, recreation and education services is critical to improving the resilience of a local community. Services referenced in this section generally include; fire protection, law enforcement, water and sewer services, public health, education, libraries, social services, parks and recreation, utilities including corridors and easements, and other governmental or non-governmental services considered of value to the community, but which are not identified as physical public infrastructure. MCA 76-1-601 (2) (e) defines requirements for a growth policy to outline a “strategy for development, maintenance, and replacement of public infrastructure, including drinking water systems, wastewater treatment facilities, sewer systems, solid waste facilities, fire protection facilities, roads, and bridges;” these considerations are typically addressed in a community capital improvement plan (CIP).

INCORPORATING RESILIENCE

Distance to Services:

Consider mapping the distance to services like health care, low-income assistance, social services, open space and public facilities by census block area and transportation corridor, to visualize access to different services throughout your community.

Access to Mental & Behavioral Health Resources

While this section often mobilizes a level of service (LOS) ratio to outline the number of law enforcement individuals per capita or the number of individuals served by a community service, consider adding a ratio that measures access to mental and behavioral health services in the community by the number of service providers.

Reliance on Volunteers

Consider working with local community service providers to get an inventory of volunteer rates within the organizations. Track the rates of volunteerism over time and consider outlining and community strategy to maintaining or increasing the level of volunteerism in the community.

Potential Growth Policy Strategies and Actions:

1. Encourage local service providers such as police, firefighters, and others to be trauma-informed to increase the quality of services and reduce unneeded conflict.
2. Track the reliance of community services on volunteers and develop a plan to increase the recruitment of volunteers to preserve consistent service provision.
3. Develop quantifiable service access goals. Examples: Aim to have statistically equal access to public services by demographics such as income and race.

NOTE: The public facilities or capital improvements element of the growth policy usually identifies, in general terms, the capital improvement needs, goals, and policies of the community. Montana statute at 76-1-601 (2) (e) requires that the growth policy include a strategy for the development, maintenance, and replacement of public infrastructure. This requirement is traditionally completed through a separate or coordinated capital improvements planning process. The Montana Department of Commerce offers the guide "Capital Improvements Planning: A Strategic Tool for Planning and Financing Public Infrastructure" to aid communities in the process.



PUBLIC FACILITIES

Adequate public facilities are crucial for protecting public health and safety, supporting local growth and development, and enhancing the quality of life. The construction and proper maintenance and operation of public facilities is one of the greatest financial responsibilities placed upon Montana's municipalities and counties. These facilities should be planned to meet the unmet needs of the community and be resilient to the impact of natural or man-made disasters to ensure their long-range functionality and consistent provision of vital community services.

INCORPORATING RESILIENCE

Distance to Services:

Consider mapping or quantifying general distances between population demographics, neighborhoods, and public facilities to inform decisions that increase equality and access.

Hazard Area Mapping:

Consider explicitly mapping the public facilities within hazard areas. Use this data to inform strategies that reduce the facility's exposure to the hazard and potentially map out ways the development of parks and open space facilities can be used rather than impermeable development in hazard areas.

Renovation of Historical Properties:

Consider adding language that identifies historic properties to acquire for expanded public facilities in the future. Historic properties provide aesthetic, cultural, and economic benefits to the community, consider prioritizing the preservation of these properties when outlining locations for prospective publically owned facilities.

Potential Growth Policy Strategies and Actions:

1. Prioritize the development of parks and other open space public facilities in areas in the floodplain or with wildfire hazard to preserve the natural capacity of the landscape to respond to hazard events and limit future development in these areas.

3. Develop quantifiable facility access goals. Examples: Aim to have x acres of public land per resident, aim to have statistically equal access to public facilities and services by demographics such as income and race.



TRANSPORTATION

Sound transportation planning is critical to the economic, social, and environmental health of a community. In section 2, it is recommended to adopt an independent community transportation plan as an appendix to your community growth policy. Transportation planning requires specialized knowledge and studies to be conducted by professional engineers. This section generally outlines 1.) the level of service (LOS) provided by current transportation infrastructure 2.) physical condition of transportation infrastructure 3.) availability of bike paths and sidewalks 4.) connectivity of community hubs 5.) population forecasts and economic trends to predict future use of roads and other infrastructure 6.) the potential for public transportation services and other unique community considerations.

INCORPORATING RESILIENCE

Address Active Transportation

Consider adding data on the prevalence and utilization of active transportation walking and biking paths in the community.

Map Connectivity Corridors

Consider mapping the connectivity between different forms of active and vehicle transportation in the community. Map access to public services with respect to walkability. Services serving low income individuals should be connected to residential areas by safe and walkable corridors.

Map Green Transportation Related Infrastructure Developments

Consider mapping existing and areas for potential green infrastructure developments such as vegetated conveyances, permeable roads and paths, vegetated medians.

Wayfinding

Consider making wayfinding, in combination with active transportation, a priority in your community growth policy.

Potential Growth Policy Strategies and Actions:

1. Adopt a "Complete Streets" policy in your community

2. Connect trails and pedestrian infrastructure with wayfinding

3. Map and address critical transportation infrastructure junctions. Identify solutions to increase critical transportation infrastructure redundancy.



NATURAL RESOURCES

The physical and natural characteristics are some of the most important to understand and acknowledge when planning for future community development. A growth policy that acknowledges current and expected natural conditions and hazards can plan for growth that protects its residents from undue harm, financial damages, and environmental degradation. This section should include a catalog of physical characteristics such as topography, slope, geology, soils, vegetation, hydrology, wildlife, climate, flood, wildfires, earthquake, and other hazards. The overlay of this data will inform decision makers of areas that are suitable for inhabitation and future development.

INCORPORATING RESILIENCE

Water Supply as a Constraint:

Consider adding a section that outlines the communities current and projected water supply trends. Unbridled development in areas with unplanned, decentralized water extraction can lead to severe water supply issues in the future. Section 2 outlines recommendations to include a water supply planning document as an appendix to the growth policy to address the issue of water supply and future development.

Climate Change Considerations:

Consider adding climate change data and projections when creating data on flooding, drought, wildfire and other natural hazards in the community.

Urban Vegetation:

Consider mapping urban vegetation and tree cover including an account of species and catalog of native plant species in the community. This map could outline tree cover in the community, locations of urban gardens or green space, and other relevant features of the communities urban vegetation.

Silence as a Resource:

Consider adding data on sound levels in community areas.

Potential Growth Policy Strategies and Actions:

1. Develop a strategic drought management plan in coordination with basin level governmental, non-profit, conservation, and interest groups
2. Work to develop an assessment of the local impact of climate change to your local jurisdiction
3. Preserve local culturally, environmentally, and economically important natural resources such as views, sounds, or ecosystems



CDBG REQUIREMENTS

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) are administered by the Montana Department of Commerce. Montana's CDBG program, requires that each local government that applies for a CDBG public facilities or housing project must conduct a planning process that considers and describes certain elements. The section below outlines elements you can add to your growth policy to meet CDBG requirements.

Federal statute requires that each CDBG recipient:

"identify its community development and housing needs, including the needs of low and moderate income persons, and the activities to be undertaken to meet such needs."

By adding a description of the following community characteristics, a community can use their growth policy to fulfill the CDBG application requirement above and could make the community's application for CDBG Public Facilities or Housing funding more competitive.

Add a description of:

- any geographic areas within the planning jurisdiction where low and moderate income persons are concentrated and any housing or community development needs which particularly affect those areas;
- the needs of particular groups of persons who generally fall within the low and moderate income category, such as seniors, single heads of households, homeless persons, or abused or neglected children residing in shelters or group homes, for public services or facilities; and
- any projects the local government is considering to assist lower income residents

Resources:

The Montana Department of Commerce Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program provides matching grants to local governments for the preparation of Growth Policies and other planning documents mentioned in this publication. For More information contact:

CDBG Program - Housing and Public Facilities
Commerce/ Community Development Division

301 South Park Avenue - P.O Box 200523
Helena, MT 59620-0523
Phone (406) 841-2770

Website:

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ADDRESS SPECIFIC RESILIENCE NEEDS

Adding information that fully addresses resilience challenges in your community might be difficult within the scope of a growth policy. The breadth of information under a singular subject such as transportation, fire or flood protection, climate adaptation, or infrastructure improvements all warrant their own professionally developed and designed plans. When possible consider adding the following independent planning documents as appendices to your growth policy and referencing them within the document. Your updated growth policy can add pre-existing copies of these and other relevant plans to dive deeper into specific subjects your community would like to address as they develop.

Potential Appendices:

1. Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan -

The Hazard Mitigation Act of 2000 requires states, counties, towns, and cities to have a regularly updated, FEMA approved mitigation plan in order to be eligible for non-emergency federal assistance. Hazard mitigation planning offers participants and local practitioners to identify, rank and plan to address the natural and man-made hazards in their community. Communities are encouraged to attach and reference a community pre-disaster mitigation plan within their growth policies to coordinate community growth with respect to expected hazards.

2. Drought Management Plan -

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation is currently working to build off of local and national drought management planning efforts to promote basin-wide water supply planning across the state. Consider developing a drought management plan in your region and developing your growth policy with reference to the strategies and vulnerabilities identified in your drought management plan.

3. Community Wildfire Preparedness Plan (CWPP) -

Community Wildfire Preparedness Plans follow a similar process and offer a more focused hazard mitigation approach than that found in a pre-disaster mitigation plan. Consider undertaking a dual-planning process to create your community's hazard mitigation and CWPPs in coordination with one another while also referencing the plan and attaching it as an appendix in your community growth policy.

4. Climate Change Adaptation and/or Mitigation Plan -

Many Montana communities have developed plans to mitigate and adapt to the expected effects of climate change in the state. Consider developing a climate mitigation & adaptation plan for your community. Implement lessons learned and strategies from the climate planning process into your community's growth policy.

5. Affordable Housing Plan -

Affordable housing is a complex issue often referenced and discussed in a growth policy. However, the complexity of the subject can make it difficult to fully address the subject within the constraints of a growth policy. Consider coordinating the creation of your growth policy with strategies identified in an affordable housing plan to fully address affordable housing in your community.

6. Open Space & Recreation Plan -

Consider developing an Open Space and Recreation plan that addresses the economic, social, and ecological benefits of well-thought-out open space development in your community. Open Space plans should be developed in coordination with disaster mitigation and economic development plans to ensure the planned open space protects the natural flood mitigation capacity of the land and supports economically sound recreation opportunities.

7. Historic Preservation Plan -

Historic preservation plans can be powerful tools to help guide development towards culturally significant locations, reduce blight, support a community's cultural resilience, and utilize existing development. Consider referencing strategies developed in the context of a community historic preservation plan within the community growth policy to direct future development to historic districts and buildings.

8. Transportation & Economic Development Plans -

Utilize existing transportation and economic development plans to their greatest extent by incorporating findings and strategies from these plans within your community growth policy.

Example Strategies

EXAMPLE STRATEGIES FROM REGIONAL PLANS

The following section outlines a series of best practices for resilience strategies to include in your local growth policy. These strategies address environmental, social, and economic resilience challenges in ways that are both unique to the region and can be generally applied to communities of similar sizes in the area. The list of strategies is not comprehensive and aims to offer guidance of good language to use in your community's growth policy to address resilience challenges.

COMMUNITY PLANS REFERENCED:



CITY/TOWN	POPULATION	CITY/TOWN	POPULATION
BOZEMAN, MT	48,250	HAVRE, MT	9,846
CASPER, WY	59,324	MINOT, ND	48,743
COEUR D'ALENE, ID	44,137	MISSOULA, MT	73,340
DILLON, MT	4,257	ROUNDUP, MT	1,740
EKALAKA, MT	353	SALMON, ID	3,055
		WILLISTON, ND	26,426



BOZEMAN, MT

POPULATION: 48,250

Protect important wildlife habitats, and natural areas which provide for beneficial functions, such as floodplains

Generation of renewable energy including solar and wind power as an accessory use is encouraged with proper design and compatibility to adjacent uses.

Stormwater systems should be designed using Low Impact Development principles.

Encourage and support the creation of a broad range of housing types in proximity to services and transportation

Foster a diverse economy that will protect the economic climate for existing businesses and maintain opportunities for business expansion. options.

Discourage development in areas characterized by wetlands, flooding, high water table, steep slopes, landslide hazard, and wild land fire prone areas.

Protect riparian corridors to provide wildlife habitat and movement areas, and to buffer all wetlands and water bodies.

Maintain and enhance floodplain capacity for conveying and storing floodwaters.



CASPER, WY

POPULATION: 59,324

Encourage the development of greenspaces in the Downtown District. Potential greenspaces could include a Town Square Park, Riverfront Park and a “Rails to Trails” project which utilizes the abandoned railroad right-of-way, as well as pocket parks and plantings.

Preserve, enhance, and restore the unique and historic architectural fabric of the downtown..

Develop a system of parks, open space, recreation facilities and residential neighborhoods interconnected by pedestrian and bicycle trails and greenways.

Identify, acquire, and protect view corridors to Casper Mountain from the City and from Casper Mountain to the City. Within view corridors, limit signage, billboards and overhead utility lines.

Encourage the distribution of affordable housing in order to achieve a diversified community

Enhance the cohesiveness and identity of neighborhoods by encouraging a healthy mixture of commercial, employment, and cultural uses that support the everyday needs of residents in a neighborhood.



COEUR D'ALENE, ID

POPULATION: 44,137

Enforce minimal tree removal, substantial tree replacement, and suppress topping trees for new and existing development.

Encourage all participants to make open space a priority with every development and annexation.

Wherever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation should be preserved with superior examples featured within parks and open spaces.

Areas susceptible to hazardous conditions (e.g. flooding, landslides, earthquakes, etc.) should be left in a natural state unless impacts are mitigated.

Encourage public/private partnerships to procure open space for the community while enhancing business opportunities.

Direct development of large chain warehouse ("big box") business outlets to zones that will protect neighborhoods.



DILLON, MT

POPULATION: 4,257

Enforce minimal tree removal, substantial tree replacement, and suppress topping trees for new and existing development.

Encourage all participants to make open space a priority with every development and annexation.

Wherever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation should be preserved with superior examples featured within parks and open spaces.



EKALAKA, MT

POPULATION: 353

Discourage land development in floodplain areas. All residential structures are to be located at least 100 feet outside a designated 100-year floodplain, or 100 feet from a stream or lake edge in undesignated areas.

Encourage developers to dedicate to the property owner's association open space, wildlife habitat, and/or riparian areas within or in close proximity to a development to comply with parkland requirements.

Prepare and adopt a policy which can be provided to developers ahead of time to guide the review of telecommunications towers and wind farm applicants and permits.



HAVRE, MT

POPULATION: 9,846

Residential development should be discouraged within the 100-year floodplain and prohibited in the floodway or any area that includes the center of the channel of the stream or river or carries the majority of water during a flood.

Preserve hazardous areas (subject to geologic and flood hazards) as open space wherever possible.

Identify and protect the natural buffers along the Milk River and local drainage features.

Encourage the preservation of habitat areas for the benefit of the planning area's indigenous wildlife and quality of life of local residents.

The City should participate in periodic needs assessments and inventories to determine immediate and long-range affordable housing needs.

Encourage mixed use development.

Expand and support opportunities for value-added agriculture-based business.



MINOT, ND

POPULATION: 48,743

Use greenway corridors as the element to link parks and open space areas.

Integrate trails into larger scale developments with connection to existing and proposed extensions of the Minot trail system.

Managing storm water using natural filtration and other ecologically based approaches to avoid down-stream flooding.



MISSOULA, MT

POPULATION: 73,340

Partner with public health department and businesses to make active transportation a wellness issues

Update and implement Historic Preservation Plan and coordinate with downtown Master Plan.

Develop and update neighborhood plans based on historic design patterns that unify neighborhoods and foster a sense of belonging and identifies opportunities for outdoor amenities and public gathering spaces

Incentivize mixed-use development so that residences are within walking distance to grocery stores and other basic necessities.

Monitor the status of climate change by tracking available strategic indicators including, but not limited to, the following: temperature, precipitation, snowfall, days below freezing, fire energy, and installation of photovoltaic infrastructure.

Educate residents regarding mitigation techniques for fire-prone areas.

Promote and incentivize green building infrastructure, energy conservation, recycling, renewable energy (solar/geo-thermal), zero waste, etc. Also consider disincentives such as fees and pollution pricing.

Institute programs and projects to address sustainability and climate change such as repair of aging water mains, recycling and reuse of materials to achieve zero waste, water metering, etc.

Conduct a housing needs assessment to identify the demand for affordable housing, inventory developable land, market for downtown housing, and areas that can accommodate higher density multi-dwelling development, etc.

Acquire, restore and protect river and stream corridors and floodplains as open space whenever possible including corridors outside urban service areas.

Develop a river corridor plan to address land use, river access, open space, transportation, water quality, views and vistas and wildlife habitat.

Integrate opportunities to connect parks, schools and open space through trails and green space in various city plans.

Identify and protect appropriate locations for agricultural uses and value-added production.



ROUNDUP, MT

POPULATION: 1,740

Ensure new development is located in areas with minimal hazards.

Work with Musselshell County to find ways to address homes and businesses located in the floodplain

Develop an open space/parks plan for the floodplain properties to be purchased.



SALMON, ID

POPULATION: 3,055

The City of Salmon should recognize all opportunities to work with and encourage local businesses and industries to utilize their operations as a resource for education for high school and university extensions, such as the study of geology and mines, reclamation, and the mitigation of environmental impacts.

The City of Salmon should actively support and promote the county's efforts to preserve productive agricultural lands as one of its most valuable natural resource-based industries. As part of this effort the City shall support and encourage the development of locally grown farm products, support and promote name face value for the sales of farm products, provide suitable locations in the city for the processing and sale of farm products, encourage and promote the utilization of sustainable natural resources, promote a sustainable regional economy and the preservation of productive agricultural lands and valuable natural resource based industries.

For a diverse and sustainable economy and to promote Salmon as a center for the study of geological, agricultural, and environmental sciences, the City of Salmon should actively promote outdoor recreational opportunities and tourism as one of its most valuable natural resource based industries, encourage the development of a wildlife education center, and explore the possibilities of promoting Salmon as a wildlife education center for the region.

The City should work with the appropriate agencies to encourage open space, including that land already designated as open space that provides fish and wildlife habitat, paying particular attention to waterways and wetland areas.

The City of Salmon should require development to take into account the following in considering site location and ultimate development standards: • protection of natural vegetation as much as possible; • minimizing soil disturbance; • wildfire mitigation standards; • noxious weeds; • water quality; • noise consideration; • possible pollution impacts; and • lighting impacts and concerns.

The City of Salmon should monitor, manage, and protect the watershed area in and around the city.

The City of Salmon's fish and wildlife resources are a local and national treasure, and the community recognizes a stewardship responsibility for their protection. Future development in the city limits will take place in this context.



WILLISTON, ND

POPULATION: 3,055

Dedicate 6 percent of residential land to parks and open space, subject to acceptance by the Park District, and 10 percent for PUDs.

Follow best management practices to limit development in the 100-year flood plain; allow natural wetlands to perform their functions of storm-water retention and filtration.

Connect trail systems with existing trails and designated pedestrian/bicycle routes.

As the city grows, coordinate with the Park and Recreation District to identify potential trail corridors along preferred creeks and coulees and acquire contiguous land for the establishment of public greenways with trails.

As the city grows, coordinate with the Park and Recreation District to identify potential trail corridors along preferred creeks and coulees and acquire contiguous land for the establishment of public greenways with trails.

Seek funding to purchase designated open space areas or acquire them during the development process.

Encourage landscaping with drought-resistant plants on private property to reduce water dependency; provide information about plant species with low water needs. Encourage landscaping that utilizes resilient plant species; encourage landscaping that reduces water dependency; provide information about plant species with low water needs.

Pursue compact development to reduce auto dependency.

Preserve emergent wetlands and riparian habitat to retain and filter runoff from rooftops, streets, and parking surfaces.

Facilitate the creation of daycare centers and home daycares to address the current shortage of child care providers.

APPENDIX 6: TOOLS AND RESOURCE LIST

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

[Land Banking; converting vacant properties into productive places](#)

[Individual Homebuyer Assistance, Grants, Rehabilitation, Building](#)

[Already occurring HUD programs in Montana](#)

[Homebuyer Education and Counseling in Montana](#)

[Disaster and Emergency Services Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grants](#)

[Council for Affordable and Rural Housing](#)

[Equitable Development Toolkit for Employer Assisted Housing](#)

ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

[Access Community Leadership and Concentrate Effort: Counties in Rural Minnesota for Broadband Use](#)

[Map of Internet Service Across Montana](#)

[Open Source Data of Montana](#)

[USDA Broadband Loan Access](#)

ECONOMIC DIVERSITY

[Creating Sustainable Destinations](#)

[Anaconda, MT Recreation Economy](#)

[Opportunity Zones and Opportunity Funds](#)

[Rural Partners with Main Street Montana](#)

[Montana Statewide Business Expansion and Retention Program](#)

[Encouraging Rural Tourism](#)

[Redeveloping Commercial Vacant Properties](#)

ECONOMIC DIVERSITY

[Michigan Main Street Economic Impacts](#)

[Building American Cities Toolkit](#)

SKILLED WORKFORCE

[Apprenticeship Tax Credit](#)

[SafetyFestMT Trainings and Certifications](#)

[Example: Pennsylvania Local Apprenticeship Trainings](#)

[Geography of Jobs for Future Growth](#)

[Disaster and Emergency Services Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grants](#)

[Council for Affordable and Rural Housing](#)

MENTAL HEALTH

[PAX Good Behavior Game Early Learning](#)

[Statistics and Facts on Suicide in Montana](#)

[National Alliance on Mental Health in Montana](#)

[Medicaid in Montana and Healthy Montana Kids](#)

[Montana Native Youth Suicide Reduction Plan](#)

[Example: The Healing Garden in Milwaukee](#)

POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

[Environmental Protection Agency Local Food Local Places Toolkit](#)

[Montana Co-Op Local Food Marketplace](#)

[Montana County Data for Food Insecurity](#)

[Medicaid in Montana and Healthy Montana Kids](#)

[Continuum of Care Program to End Homelessness](#)

[Food Access Research Atlas](#)

[6th Ward Garden Park in Helena MT Garden Education](#)

[Financial Wellness Trainings](#)

WILDFIRES

[Montana Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan](#)

[Planning for Health Risks from Wildfires](#)

[Wildfire Smoke and Public Health](#)

[Planning Tools to Reduce Montana's Wildfire Risk](#)

[Reducing Montana's Risk in the Wildlife-Urban Interface](#)

FLOODING

[National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System](#)

[Surface Water Assessment and Monitoring Program in Montana](#)

[Community Resilience Floodplain Green Guide](#)

INFRASTRUCTURE

[Treasure State Endowment Program \(TSEP\) Grants](#)

[Montana Department of Revenue Energy Conservation Investments Deduction](#)

[Midwest Assistance Program \(MAP\) for Infrastructure Solutions](#)

[Environmental Protection Agency Community Reuse Property Prioritization Tool](#)

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ADAPTATION

[Economics of Climate Adaptation](#)

[U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit](#)

ASSET BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

[Community Building Toolkit](#)

VOLUNTEERISM

Universities across the state have volunteer programs, getting students involved in various projects, for example:

[University of Montana](#)

[Montana State University](#)

[Carroll College](#)

[Encouraging EMT Volunteerism](#)

CHILDCARE

[Healthy Montana Kids Insurance Plan](#)

AGING POPULATIONS

[Montana State Aging Services](#)

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

[Montana Memory Project](#)

[Clues to Rural Community Survival](#)

[Community Organizing Handbook](#)

[Example: Inspiring Community Connection Through Community Development](#)

[Helena MT Using Events to Inspire Community Connections](#)

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

[Statistics on Drug Abuse in America](#)

[Meth Use in Montana](#)

[Cascade of Care Model for Reducing Opioid Overdose](#)

[Commercial Tobacco Use Prevention Starts at Home](#)

[Preventing Prescription Drug Abuse](#)

[Statistics on Social Interaction and Patterns of Addiction](#)

[Example: Community Prevention and Support Meetings in Helena MT](#)

DROUGHT

[Montana State Water Plan](#)

[Montana State Climate Assessment](#)

[Montana State Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan](#)

[Montana Drought Monitor](#)

[Planning for Drought in Montana](#)

Federal Resources

[FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities \(BRIC\)](#)

[NOAA's U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit](#)

[U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Community Resilience](#)

[Environmental Protection Agency Regional Resilience Toolkit](#)

[National Institute of Standards and Technology Community Resilience Planning Guide](#)

Non-Governmental Resilience Resources

[The Kresge Foundation: Community-Driven Climate Resilience Planning](#)

[EPA Regional Resilience Toolkit](#)

[Montana Climate Assessment](#)

[ClimateWise Vulnerability Assessments](#)

[Model Forest Policy Program](#)

[Georgetown University Adaptation Clearinghouse](#)

[Geos Institute Climate Ready Communities](#)

[National Institute of Standards and Technology Community Resilience Planning Guide](#)

[EcoAdapt Climate Adaptation Knowledge Exchange \(CAKE\)](#)

[NOAA's U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit](#)

State Resources

[Department of Commerce, Community Development](#) (technical assistance available)

[Montana Office of Emergency Services, Disaster and Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan](#)

[Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Water Resources](#)

[Montana Department of Agriculture, Food and Ag Development Centers](#)

[Montana State University Extension](#)

[Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Office of Community Service](#)

[Montana Climate Assessment \(MCA\): Water, Forests and Agriculture \(2017\)](#)

[MCA: Climate Change and Human Health \(2020\)](#)

[MCA: Community Tools and Resources](#)

[Montana Climate Solutions Plan \(2020\)](#)